THE WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL QUARTERLY.

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THE WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL QUARTERLY.

JULY, 1917.

PURPOSE:—To help the women of to-day in their interpretation of Christianity, and in the application of Christian principles to the conditions of their life and work.

Supra-Nationality.

"The present condition of the world constitutes a call to emphasize more than ever before the supra-nationality of the missionary movement and of the Church of Christ generally. In its very essence the missionary message is opposed to everything that savours of racial antipathy or prejudice. . . .

"After the war we should seek every opportunity for friendly co-operation with persons in other countries whose ideals we can fully share, and the missionary movement provides one of the best of such opportunities. May we not expect that God will use it to help in drawing together the peoples that have been estranged, and to bring healing and health to all the nations? If, however, the missionary outlook were narrowed, and forced from international into national channels, a unique opportunity would be lost."

(From "The Friend," Feb. 16th, 1917.)

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Comment Faire Entendre l'Appel du Christ ?

Suzanne de Dietrich.

COMMENT faire entendre l'appel du Christ à la foule des jeunes filles qui nous entourent ? C'est la question qui se pose tous les jours, lancinante, à notre esprit, que nous nous mêlions à la foule pressée des " midinettes " envahissant le métropolitain ou à la foule, moins bruyante et plus inabordable, des étudiantes du Quartier Latin. Cette foule, comment l'attirer ?

Vous me demandez quelques expériences personnelles, et mon premier mouvement, en songeant à l'œuvre magnifique accomplie depuis la guerre par la Y.W.C.A. d'Angleterre, eut été de m'écrier : ce qui est à faire ?—tout ; ce que nous avons fait ?—rien ! J'ai conscience de n'avoir rien à vous apprendre, mais le fait de mettre en commun nos difficultés, et nos ambitions ne nous permet-il pas de nous soutenir plus efficacement les uns les autres dans la poursuite de notre but commun, but que la Fédération Française des Etudiants Chrétiens résume dans les trois mots de sa devise : " Faire Christ Roi " ?

Mes expériences portent plus spécialement sur le monde des étudiantes, mais je crois que les quelques réflexions que je vous apporterai peuvent s'appliquer à d'autres milieux ; les besoins essentiels de l'âme humaine sont partout identiques.

Il est à remarquer toutefois que la guerre a moins modifié les conditions de vie de l'étudiante que celles d'autres classes de femmes, exception faite des étudiantes étrangères, dont beaucoup se sont trouvées d'un jour à l'autre dans la situation la plus précaire, obligées d'abandonner leurs études pour gagner leur vie. Mais l'étudiante française qui continue ou entreprend des études malgré la guerre est hantée, elle aussi, dans la plupart des cas, par la nécessité d'arriver le plus rapidement possible à une situation indépendante, par la crainte d'être une charge pour les siens. L'étudiante sérieuse est portée à considérer tout ce qui la distrait de son travail comme temps perdu, et ce n'est pas une des moindres difficultés auxquelles se heurtent nos Associations d'Etudiantes.

Alors même que les circonstances matérielles seraient restées les mêmes, la guerre devait avoir pour effet de poser devant tous les esprits réfléchis, avec un sérieux nouveau, les grands problèmes de la vie religieuse et morale. Beaucoup ont trouvé dans l'action un dérivatif momentané à leur angoisse intérieure ; mais cet état ne saurait durer. Il appartient aux femmes de former les jeunes générations ; nous savons de jeunes professeurs (remarquons à ce propos que, pour la première fois en France, des jeunes filles ont été appelées à professer dans des lycées de garçons) qui sentent lourdement peser sur leurs épaules leur responsabilité d'éducatrices ; une de mes amies, libre-penseuse, m'avouait récemment l'impuissance de la morale laique telle qu'elle est enseignée dans les livres d'écoles, à former véritablement des caractères.

Chez nombre d'étudiantes, ce que j'appellerai la " foi sociale " avait remplacé la foi religieuse ; à défaut de religion positive elles avaient celle d'humanité ; et voici que la guerre donne un cruel démenti aux rêves humanitaires dont une élite libre-penseuse s'était bercée, et lui prouve . . . que c'est le cœur de l'homme qu'il faudrait changer. Quelle force humaine serait capable de le faire ?

Certains voient, non sans raison, dans la guerre actuelle une faillite du christianisme ; ils ont le tort d'identifier la religion du Christ avec ses représentants dans un monde qui n'a encore dans son ensemble de chrétien que le nom. Ils ne croient pas que le christianisme soit susceptible de transformer le monde " puisqu'il ne l'a pas fait jusqu'à présent."

Comment dissiper ce malentendu tragique qui fait rejaillir sur le Maître lui-même les infidélités de ses disciples ? Ah certes, notre premier acte sera un acte d'humiliation profonde, l'aveu loyal de nos reniements. Dans le reproche de nos amies libres-penseuses il y a une part de verité qui doit nous rendre plus sévères pour nous-mêmes, plus larges de cœur et d'esprit à l'égard des autres. Il y a aussi une part d'erreur, car Jésus a prévenu ses disciples que son Royaume ne viendrait point avec éclat : Il règne aujourd'hui dans plus de cœurs que nos adversaires ne le croient et ils ignorent tout ce qu'ils doivent à cette action permanente et cachée du Christ Vivant dans les cœurs fidèles. . . . Mais cette réserve faite, reconnaissons qu'ils sont dans la ligne du Christ en déclarant que l'arbre

se reconnaît à ses fruits. Le réalisme de notre époque, peu soucieux des spéculations philosophiques, ne connaît qu'une apologétique—celle des faits.

Il s'agit pour nous aujourd'hui "*non de démontrer Dieu mais de le montrer.*" Il s'agit de prouver—individuellement par nos vies, collectivement par nos œuvres—que l'Evangile est *une puissance* ; qu'il communique à ceux qui croient une force surnaturelle qui les élève au-dessus des circonstances et les rend prêts à toutes les tâches ; qu'il allume en eux une passion de justice internationale et sociale sans compromis ; mais qu'avant tout et par-dessus tout l'Evangile est Amour ; et que s'il rend apte aux grandes actions, il possède ce don plus merveilleux encore de faire de l'existence la plus terne une traînée de lumière en mettant à la portée de tous la joie suprême ; celle de servir.

Comment nos camarades croiraient-elles en un amour qui ne se manifesterait pas ? qui attendrait qu'elles viennent à nous au lieu d'aller à elles ? qui ne chercherait pas à entrer dans toutes les difficultés de leurs vies ? Or ces difficultés sont multiples ; elles sont à la fois d'ordre matériel et moral. Nous n'en avons pas toujours suffisamment mesuré l'importance ; nous avons laissé nos camarades loger dans des hôtels meublés où nous ne saurions entrer nous-mêmes sans un frisson de dégoût : nous ne nous sommes pas rendu compte de l'isolement terrible de l'étudiante arrivant, de l'étranger ou de province, dans une ville inconnue où elle ne connaît personne. Il est venu un jour où cette pensée nous a été intolérable et où nous avons compris que nos Associations Chrétiennes ne sauraient se cantonner dans leur sphère religieuse.

Ne faisant en cela que suivre l'exemple donné par les Associations de Suisse et d'Angleterre, nous avons ouvert trois Foyers : à Paris, à Lyon et à Montpellier ; ces Foyers, gérés par des membres pris pour moitié dans l'Association Chrétienne d'Etudiantes, sont constitués en Sociétés d'Etudiantes n'ayant aucun caractère religieux ; ils comportent des salles de travail et de thé et un bureau de renseignements.*

L'étudiante est une individuelle farouche qui ne se laissera attirer que par un amour vraiment désintéressé et

* Il existe depuis des années sous le nom de Foyer de l'Etudiante, Rue St. Jacques, un restaurant féminin ; la présidente du Comité en est Mme. R. Allier, femme du président de la Fédération des Etudiants Chrétiens.

ne livrera sa détresse intime qu'à l'amie éprouvée. Notre espoir est que nos Foyers deviennent le lieu de rencontre où se nouent des amitiés fécondes ; où chacune affirmera ses convictions en toute liberté et respectera celle des autres. Nous avons constaté que ce n'est jamais le fait d'affirmer nos convictions qui aliène personne, bien au contraire, si ces convictions sont reçues ; mais le témoignage d'une vie est plus efficace que toutes les paroles ; son souvenir demeure tandis que les discours s'oublient. Il s'agit pour nous étudiantes chrétiennes, de créer dans nos Foyers " une atmosphère " qui attire et retienne.

Alors les occasions s'offriront d'elles-mêmes de dire d'où nous tirons notre force et quel est le secret de notre paix intérieure. Lorsque nous inviterons nos camarades à telle ou telle de nos séances—études bibliques, conférences religieuses—elles sauront dans quel esprit ces questions leur seront présentées et viendront à nous avec un esprit non prévenu.

Les méthodes varient suivant les milieux, mais je crois que le principe essentiel reste le même ; il faut d'abord gagner la confiance de ceux que nous voulons évangéliser, en les aimant d'un grand amour. Les occasions de prouver cet amour de façon concrète—c'est dans les petites choses que l'amour vrai se révèle—s'offrent toujours à celui qui aime véritablement. Le point de départ de la plupart des conversions n'a-t-il pas été l'amour d'un chrétien ? Je lisais dernièrement cette phrase dite peu avant sa mort par une femme dont la vie fut un apostolat : " Je n'ai pu quelquechose que pour ceux que j'ai véritablement aimés."

On a souvent parlé ces dernières années du devoir pour le chrétien de faire de l'action sociale. Cette manière de poser le problème me semble porter à malentendu. L'action sociale n'est pas un *moyen* d'atteindre les âmes—en partant de ce point de vue nous nous préparerions des désillusions très grandes—elle est un *fruit* de l'amour des âmes. Si nous ne sommes pas prêts à surmonter tous les obstacles matériels et financiers pour arracher notre camarade, ouvrière ou étudiante, à des conditions d'existence où son corps s'étiole et dépérit, c'est que nous n'aimons pas. Si nous ne faisons pas tous nos efforts pour substituer aux plaisirs malsains, cinémas, théâtre de bas étage, romans à quatre sous, dont la midinette s'abreuve faute de connaître autre chose, des plaisirs sains—réunions

récréatives, bibliothèque de prêt, courses à la campagne, etc.—c'est que nous n'aimons pas. Si nous n'allons pas trouver les jeunes filles que nous voudrions conquérir là où elles sont ; par où j'entends qu'il faut nous dépouiller de nos habitudes de pensée, de nos idées toutes faites, de tout ce qu'il y a de conventionnel dans notre morale sociale pour entrer dans *leurs* habitudes de pensée, dans *leurs* vies, et les juger d'après le code moral qui a cours dans *leur* milieu ; par où j'entends enfin qu'il faut partir non de ce que nous voudrions qu'elles fussent, mais de ce qu'elles sont . . . si nous ne faisons pas cela, c'est que nous n'aimons pas.

Et dès lors, c'est en vain que nous convoquerions ces mêmes jeunes filles pour leur parler de notre Christ et de son amour.

Ah, combien dures sont ces réflexions ! et peut-être n'aurions-nous jamais eu le courage de les faire si d'autres ne nous y avaient forcées : l'amitié des libres-penseuses nous éclaire mieux parfois sur les déficits de notre christianisme que tous les prédicateurs du monde ; elles comprennent ce que l'amour du Christ a dû être et s'étonnent que le nôtre ne lui ressemble pas davantage ; elles rendent ce faisant un hommage au Maître mais font état de nos faiblesses pour déclarer l'Evangile utopique, irréalisable . . . Il leur semble que *si elles croyaient elles évangéliseraient avec plus de passion et que rien ne leur coûterait pour apporter au monde la Vérité qui le ferait vivre.*

Plus nous allons, plus nous sentons que ce qu'il faut pour gagner la jeunesse au Christ, ce sont des âmes d'apôtres qui lui montrent la divine beauté de l'Evangile ; il faut que nos vies soient si rayonnantes qu'elles donnent à ceux qui nous approchent envie d'être chrétiens. Si nous voulons gagner les jeunes, il faut que notre christianisme soit joyeux.

La réorganisation de nos œuvres après la guerre, leur adaptation aux besoins nouveaux, a préoccupé beaucoup d'entre nous, étudiants et étudiantes de la Fédération Française ; ce n'est pas seulement la jeunesse française qui fait l'objet de nos pensées. Mais plus nous nous sentons réduits en nombre, noyau infime au milieu de la masse hostile ou indifférente, plus la tâche apparaît écrasante, plus aussi nous apprenons à mettre notre seul point d'appui en Dieu. Les questions d'organisation et de

méthode ont leur valeur ; et pourtant elles nous apparaissent de plus ne plus comme secondaires. Nous sentons que nous ne pouvons travailler à sauver la France qu'en faisant de nos vies *des apostolats*. Cet esprit d'apostolat, quelques-uns l'avaient à la veille de la guerre ; et si la guerre a fauché des vies précieuses, elle n'a brisé aucune de nos espérances ; que dis-je, elle les a approfondies, sanctifiées par la souffrance. Ce que nous demandons à Dieu, tous, d'un même élan, jeunes gens et jeunes filles que préoccupe l'évangélisation de notre peuple, c'est la grâce d'une consécration totale ; tout le reste viendra par surcroît.

Girls' Work in the World's Y.W.C.A.

Gladys E. Bretherton.

THE term "girls' work" as used throughout this issue of the "QUARTERLY" needs perhaps some explanation. Roughly speaking, it covers any Association activities among our members under the age of eighteen. The various National Associations employ different terms in speaking of these members, so that in one country we find "juniors" or "intermediates," in another "teen-age girls," while in others no distinction is made between them and the older members.

In studying the reports and other literature of our Associations one finds how gradually and yet how steadily this work has grown and developed as in each country in turn the needs of the younger girls have become apparent. Quite early in the history of the Association in Great Britain, before 1880, work was undertaken for children in connection with several existing branches, generally by enlisting their interest in some special missionary activity. A few years later we find in the United States a "Little Girls' Christian Association" at Oakland, California, and in 1886 there was formed in Poughkeepsie a branch of

girls from ten to sixteen years of age, with a girl secretary of its own, and run entirely by the girls themselves, which within a year had one hundred and ten members. This children's work has remained, and in some countries has become quite considerable, providing often an outlet for the desire for service on the part of the older members of the Association.

But in the last ten years, as the result of education, of greater social freedom and of economic pressure, there has emerged the girl, as distinct from the child and the young woman of the earlier days—the girl with an entity of her own, and consequently her own problems and needs. Has our Association anything to give her? If we believe in the future of our Association at all we must believe that it has. Our aim is the physical, social, intellectual and spiritual welfare of all young women. We cannot, then, ignore those who are to be the young women of to-morrow at the moment when they become aware, though it may be unconsciously, of their physical and other needs.

Before the European war psychologists, educationalists, and social workers of all kinds were impressing upon us the importance of the years of adolescence, for girls no less than boys, and in several countries the Association was giving its thought and effort to meeting the needs of the girl. Special workers had been appointed to study these needs, to adapt the existing methods of work of the Association to them or to seek fresh methods, and steady progress was being made. The war has accentuated all the needs and made of infinite importance all our girls' work. The last issue of the "QUARTERLY" brought home to us the fact that our girls in many countries are now at a much earlier age than before launched out into life, often quite unprepared for the difficulties and dangers which lie ahead. Some of the articles made us realize as we have never done before the extraordinary difficulty of establishing points of contact with these girls once they are thus launched and have flung on one side conventions and restraints, which they have never fully understood, in the reckless enjoyment of their new independence and freedom. With these facts before us the importance of our "girls' work" is readily seen. If before they are placed in positions when they will and must, to a certain extent, stand alone, we can help to arouse in these girls an enthusiasm for an all-round

developed life; if we can guide the idealism, the emotion the desire for service, the hero-worship of these early years into the right channels; above all, if we can help them to see the Christ-filled life in all its power and attractiveness with how much less trepidation shall we see them take their places in the manifold activities of our modern world.

The World's Young Women's Christian Association Executive Committee is watching with interest the development of work for girls in our different National Associations, and last year, with a view to keeping in touch with all such work, at the suggestion of one of the countries most concerned a Corresponding Council was formed. This Council is made up of one member appointed by each National Association with a more or less recognized Girls' Work Department. It is hoped that by a direct link with the World's Office and by the interchange of ideas and literature fresh inspiration may be gained for the work already in existence, and information may be available for those countries which have not yet developed this side of their work but may wish to do so.

It is interesting to note how similar are the methods adopted in the different countries; how the same things appeal to girls of the age we are thinking of. The club idea, in slightly varying forms, which gives scope for originality and initiative, develops powers of leadership, and brings out the best in the girl by putting upon her a measure of responsibility, side by side with more definite discipline, and the use of symbols and ceremonial found in the Girl Guide and kindred movements, these seem to find a place in all our "girls' work," and to be capable of adaptation to the needs and conditions of all lands.

In the present issue of the "QUARTERLY" some accounts will be found of the work that is being done. They are far from complete owing to the difficulties of communication, but they will show how much is being accomplished, may serve to suggest new lines of advance to some of us, and enable us all to follow the leaders of this particular work with our sympathy and our prayers.

The Girl Guides of the Y.W.C.A. in Great Britain.

Helen Malcolm and Florence Yelf.

As has been stated in the introduction to this symposium on girls' work, a beginning was early made in this direction by the British Young Women's Christian Association. Only recently, however, can it be said that any special emphasis has been placed upon the development of work among girls in their teens. Now they are amongst those most seriously considered by the framers of national policy, and especially since the outbreak of the present war, with its special call for war-time clubs. At the present time there are about 80 intermediate girls' clubs, 400 junior branches, together with 110 companies of Girl Guides, with a membership of some 4,000 girls, a large number of Brownies (*i.e.*, future Girl Guides), and a large membership of war-time clubs, all under what is known as the Girls' Section of the Young Women's Christian Association; especially the Girl Guide movement has gone forward by leaps and bounds.

It is often asked whether Girl Guides have *done* anything. Those of us who are in close touch with the movement are not anxious to blow our own trumpets, but we often have cause humbly to thank God when mothers, schoolmistresses, employers of labour, including many mistresses of young servants, come to our captains and say, "So-and-so is a different girl to us since she joined the Guides." Implicit obedience to employers is a law in the Guide Code, and when a girl knows that she may be turned out of the patrol to which she belongs, if she is disobedient to her employer, it has a very salutary effect on the conduct of her daily life, while, conversely, it exercises a restraining influence on the careless or unscrupulous employer.

Immense power in the administration of the Guides' Laws lies in the hands of the commissioners and captains, and it is to them that Miss Baden-Powell looked for the administration of discipline, which she strove to inculcate. A captain is assumed to have the knowledge of a "First-

class Guide"; this entails self-denying pegging away at what to a girl of liberal education may easily seem to be unnecessary knowledge, but Guide captains know that the respect of the modern girl between twelve and eighteen can only be won by those who have something to teach her, and that, therefore, whether it is in the making of a blouse or the skinning of a rabbit, the lighting of a fire or the inner meaning of the Guide Law, the success of her company is dependent on her own enthusiasm and service, and therein lies the whole secret of the system.

Some of us have proved now in times of national strain that the eight years of discipline help to produce self-controlled, useful girls, who, having learned to obey, are of use to their older sisters in lowly ways. Reports reach us daily of the activities of Girl Guides in response to appeals for service; many after their school or work hours weeding sadly-neglected gardens, knitting for the men, washing socks for the billeted soldiers, collecting newspapers for the Prince of Wales' Fund, collecting bottles for chemists, gardening (with such success that one company recently made £7), cooking for their worse-off neighbours; starting crêches in the districts where the soldiers' wives have to go out to work, running errands for the various women's organizations free of charge, addressing letters for numerous aid societies, and serving teas and lunches to the troops as the transport trains pass their towns.

In one large Midland town the distress among the Guides themselves was very acute in the early days of the war. The managers of a large firm in the neighbourhood, who received a big order through the demands of war, wrote to the Girl Guide captain, asking that a patrol of trustworthy girls might be sent up. Nine girls who had lost their own employment went off at once, with the result that they were guaranteed work for three months at 10s. a week each, and what was even better, their conduct was such that the manager promised to give preference in any suitable vacancies which might occur in his works to the Guides of this town.

These are small things, but young girls cannot do very great things. Now, as the weary months drag on, we do not find the spirit of duty or self-sacrifice is failing. Month after month the same cheery patriotism beams from the little faces beneath the floppy blue hats, and a Red Cross

nurse expressed what many feel of Guide work in contrast to the work of the less-disciplined flapper who helped in her hospital: "Thank goodness it's the Guide's turn to-day," she said, "the glasses won't be all smudgy."

The Young Women's Christian Association is grateful to the Guide movement for much that it has brought to its organization. It has done for our intermediates in their Christian lives something of what expression work does for a kindergarten class. At an age when the witness of speech for the Master we serve is not easy or even always desirable, by deeds, not words, it is teaching the flapper not to flap but to rise and fly on wings of loving thought and service for others till she attracts others to greater heights. And there are to-day, scattered up and down the land, girls who will tell you what they owe to their Y.W.C.A. Guide Companies—girls who are resisting temptation to innumerable small acts of business dishonesty and innumerable acts which lessen feminine self-respect, and if you question them you will find they have said as they left their beloved company and their captain, "Let me keep my 'life,' captain; it will remind me to keep straight." And the little shamrock brooch so dear to us all, that they call their 'life,' stands for the three Guide promises:—

"I promise on my honour—

"1. To be loyal to God and the king.

"2. To try to do daily good turns to other people.

"3. To obey the law of the Guides."

There are stories of Guides' self-control in this past year of air-raids and alarms which are not unworthy of the traditions of a great nation, but perhaps the greatest victory of all is won by those Guides who retain their patriotism and loyalty in the midst of the antagonistic talk of their fellow factory hands; who "Fear God and honour the king," upholding the principles of a song adopted by many companies—

> We will speak no ill of our Sovereign,
> And when we are standing by
> His name shall be treated with honour,
> Or we'll know the reason why."—

and who pray also that they may be able to "Cheer up their menfolk and keep mother cheery" when their own horizon is clouded by loss of friends, relations and employment.

For a scheme of such high ideals it will be realized that we need most sorely the co-operation of women who are willing to sacrifice time to lead the movement. The demand for officers is tremendous—but officers must be of the kind that "Keeps on keeping on." The movement is a real honest attempt to train character, far more by example than by precept; and the training of a Guide patrol leader falls to the captain and lieutenant. It cannot be accomplished in a two hours' parade each week. It involves real social intercourse and disciplined woman friendship, for undisciplined friendship has spelt disaster to hundreds of our girls. The officer certainly has large demands made upon her by her Guides—their faith in her is unbounded; but she believes in her calling and knows that, at the age with which she deals (from fourteen to nineteen), hero-worship of some sort is inevitable; and she accepts the homage whether expressed by salute or astounding obedience, remembering that she has also taken Guide promises, and realizing very fully and humbly the truth of Florence Nightingale's words:—

"We ought to be what we seem, or those under us will find out very soon that we only seem what we ought to be."

Work for Girls in Italy.

Mary Rossi.

THIRTY years ago the fourteen-year-old Italian girl who was still going to school and had sufficient commonsense to be able to speak of anything besides her future marriage was rarely met with. It is almost impossible for us to understand, so great has been the transformation, the striking difference between the Italian young girl of then and of to-day. Affectionate and enthusiastic by nature, and endowed with a goodly portion of health and strength, and with a mind keen and open to all impressions, the Italian girl has invaluable qualities, which can be, if properly developed, of the utmost use to herself and others; thus a most interesting field of work opens up at once before one.

The Young Women's Christian Association has realized

and appreciated this opportunity, the girl of to-day being the woman of to-morrow. In Italy, as in many other countries where old habits of thought are difficult to eradicate, even when newer customs have found a certain foothold, work among the younger generation is of inestimable importance.

At our last National Convention (1913) the junior branch and the Girl Guide movement were largely discussed, and a Committee was appointed specially to study the question. There has been in consequence a newly-awakened interest in the various Associations with regard to the work among the juniors. However, it was not until last year (1916) that anything very definite was undertaken, a small Committee having met in Rome in December, 1915, to draw up a plan of work. This plan was further discussed and elaborated at the Training Course for Association Volunteer Workers, held in Florence last November.

The Girl Guide programme seems to be for the present the best adapted to our needs, emphasising, as it does, love of nature, self-discipline, sense of honour, loyalty to God and country, besides developing practical usefulness in so many ways. The National Committee, therefore, decided to publish a monthly Girl Guide leaflet (*Bollettino Mensile delle Giovani Guide*), beginning with January, 1917, for the purpose of giving hints to instructors and general information. Girl Guide Companies are being organized in Rome and in Florence, and the junior branches of other Associations, such as Spezia, San Remo, Bordighera, Turin, Milan, Naples, and the Waldensian Valleys will undoubtedly soon follow their example.

There are besides two other small branches of work recently organized by some of our Associations. One is the "Scuola del Giovedi" (the Thursday school), Thursday being the weekly holiday of the elementary schools, started first in Turin. Another is the "Dopo-Scuola" (afternoon school) for the soldiers' little girls whose mothers go out to work. These leave their schools at noon, and would be on the street the entire afternoon if not provided for. The first "Dopo-Scuola" was started in Rome and is a great boon to these girls, who receive their noon-day meal and are kept pleasantly occupied during the afternoon.

Girl Guides in South Africa.

F. N. Black.

I THINK to most people who work among girls in a town like Johannesburg come moments when they are overwhelmed with the feeling of despair and helplessness as to how really to help those whose lives are so beset with temptations, and who not only live in an atmosphere of immorality and sin of all kinds, but seem to enjoy the pleasures provided by it and to want nothing more. I say *seem*, for I think in most young lives, however low they may have fallen, there is, deep down, a craving after what is higher and better, and a gay, careless exterior is often the cover for many an aching heart. To my mind the Guide movement comes not exactly as a solution but as an agency by means of which girls may be got hold of at an impressionable time in their lives, and their minds instilled with high ideals of purity and honour, loyalty to God and usefulness to others, such as are embodied in the Girl Guides' Code of Laws. It is Ellice Hopkins who says "It is better to place a fence at the top of the precipice than to provide an ambulance at the bottom." I like to think of the Guide movement in this country as the fence which will guard young lives from falling into those pitfalls of sin and ruin which abound all around us.

And it seems, too, so admirably fitted for this country. With its opportunity for out-of-door recreation and instruction, and its openings for developing initiative and self-reliance, it just suits the open-air life and independent spirit of the colonial girl, and provides at the same time a certain amount of discipline and restraint which is necessary for the good all-round development of girls, but is sometimes rather lacking in the present-day girls of this as well as of other countries.

We started our Johannesburg Company about a year ago. Invitations were given to girls attending commercial schools, business colleges, the telephone exchange, and to others, to come to a preliminary meeting, at which the aims and methods of the movement were to be described. Twenty-three were present; the enthusiasm of the girls was aroused, and at the close of the meeting all

declared their intention of becoming Guides. A date and time were fixed for the first rally, and so a beginning was made. A good deal of prejudice had, and still has, to be overcome, chiefly from mothers who imagined their girls were to be turned into Boy Scouts!

However, we are gradually living it down, and several mothers have since testified to the improvement they have noticed in their daughters through the Guide training, both as regards character and by becoming more useful in their homes.

Our members gradually increased till we numbered forty. New recruits are constantly joining, while at the same time we have reluctantly to say good-bye to many a Guide who leaves the town or who finds her business prevents her attending the meetings so our number remains fairly stationary. We are hoping soon to start a Brownie* Company to meet the demands of the little sisters of the Guides, who want so badly to be Guides but have to be told they are not old enough.

About six months after its formation the Company arranged a concert, and was successful in raising close on £14, part of which went into the Guides' own fund for equipment, and part was given to the Governor-General's Fund.

In September of last year our Company had the proud honour of forming an escort for Viscountess Buxton when she came to lay the foundation-stone of our new Young Women's Christian Association building. Her Excellency takes a great interest in the Guides, and the Hon. Doreen Buxton is the Commissioner for South Africa.

In the early part of this year we had a most delightful camp in a beautiful spot just outside the town, lent us by one of the Guides' mothers. The girls thoroughly enjoyed themselves, and looked the picture of health on their return.

A Company has just been formed in Pretoria. Its recruits are, of course, still very raw and untrained, and only number fourteen, but we are hoping great things for it, and are looking forward to soon having a company which shall be worthy of the Capital of the Union. There are also Young Women's Christian Association Companies in Cape Town, Durban and Port Elizabeth.

* "Brownies" are children under eleven years of age.

Girls' Work in the United States.

Mary S. Sims,

Department of Method Secretary for Cities.

UNDER the heading of " Girls " we include all our members from twelve to eighteen years of age. This main division falls naturally into three groups—girls in grade schools, girls in high schools and young employed girls. Each of these groups presents different problems and possibilities. Our work with high school girls is at present entirely of the student type. The clubs are organized with each school as a unit, and where there are a number of schools in one community the clubs are bound together in a council. These clubs are affiliated through our student movement with the World's Student Christian Federation. The clubs are usually under the leadership of one of the teachers in the school; they come together for Bible study, for social good times and for service. Several week-end conferences are held during the year in different parts of the country. The clubs near by send delegates to these conferences, and there the girls have opportunity to discuss their clubs and see what others are doing. In the summer also, ten-day conferences are held with the high school girls. These days together mean much in making the girls conscious of the movement and send them home eager to promote their own clubs. There are at present 107 high school clubs with 9,549 members.

The work among young employed girls has not been actively promoted apart from the work done with the girls in industry as a group. We are coming to realize, however, how truly this is a girls' work problem. The fact that these girls happen to be thrust out early to earn their living does not make them less eager for the things that more fortunate girls of fourteen or fifteen or sixteen years of age enjoy. In addition to clubs where they have normal good times and active recreation, this group looks to us for help in becoming more efficient in their work, for advice as to what kind of work to do and help in finding it. Our clubs must counteract also the tendency (so common in this group) to drift from one ill-paid, unskilled job to another with no aim

in view and little opportunity for self-improvement. They need to be made ready for the more serious club work of the older industrial girls, competent to take their place in the great struggle of labour.

Perhaps our biggest hopes and possibilities for the future lie with the girls still in the grade schools. We have some half-dozen different club plans that are being used with these girls in different parts of the country. These plans have many points in common. They make liberal use of symbols, imagery and ceremonial, and put emphasis on an outdoor life and recreation in general. All these things have tremendous appeal to this imaginative age. By the use of a graded system of honours the girls become enthusiastic doers of the small tasks and accustomed to self-control and self-discipline. The aim is the development of character and personality through the self-expression of the individual in relation to the group. The organization of the group is kept as simple as possible, but the business meetings are carried on with formality, for we feel that this is very important in teaching self-control and a respect for law and order. Our opportunity for influencing the future life of these girls is a very large one. They can sometimes be induced to stay longer in school, to go into work that has some future and to make some preparation for it. They are full of questionings also. In many of them religious impulses and desires are stirring for the first time. To meet adequately and constructively these questionings is our especial effort, and we seek the co-operation of other agencies, particularly the Sunday-schools, in this work. An attempt is made as well to develop in them interest in someone outside their own group, such as a settlement or a children's hospital. To many of these young girls it is the only demand ever made upon them to consider someone outside of themselves and their families.

Taking all these groups together we have about 28,940 girls from twelve to eighteen years of age in the Associations, only a small beginning in comparison to the opportunity.

Girls' Work in Canada.

Olive I. Ziegler,
Girls' Work Secretary.

As yet, in Canada, we feel ourselves but beginners in the school of "Girls' Work." But the encouraging thing is that we are beginning. All over the Dominion, in the most unexpected places, the question is being asked, "What are we to do for the younger girls? Girls in High Schools, girls in business, how are their resources to be conserved and their possibilities brought out?"

The question is being answered in different ways by many different people. Associations in ever-increasing numbers are considering the necessity of girls' work secretaries—specialists who will devote their whole time to planning for and studying the girl, learning about her, not only theoretically but practically, by working and playing with her, and so gaining an understanding of that intangible, yet real, something called "the girls' point of view." The Association has not yet a fixed policy, but we are experimenting, and from results are endeavouring to discover what methods are best adapted to the Canadian girl. For, like the girls of other countries, she is the unique product of her own particular environment, and from the girl herself we must learn what she requires.

In the High Schools two types of work are being tried. In some clubs are organized within the school itself, with a member of the staff as advisory officer. The girls meet regularly once a month in the High School, and their activities, except for occasional social service work, are carried on within the building itself. The meetings are of a varied nature, although following the general plan of being partly devotional, partly educational, and partly social. The educational period may take the form of a lecture from an outside speaker on some missionary, settlement, or other topic of educational value, or perhaps dramatic work, illustrating Association activities in other countries. The girls who are most keenly interested form themselves into groups of eight or ten, "discussion groups" they are called, for the purpose of Bible and mission study, and for the discussion of questions of interest in

school life. These meet usually once a week, under the leadership of a teacher or senior student.

This sort of club has much to be said for it. In many of our High Schools there is, unfortunately, very little social life, and the club can often provide a medium for a social life of the most wholesome kind; but more than this, it helps to create a school conscience, the ability on the part of the pupils to think of their responsibility to the school as a whole, and makes religion, unconsciously perhaps, a normal and vital part of school life.

In other cities the High Schools join with others in clubs of various kinds, such as the Girl Guides, which meet at the City Association. One City Secretary writes, "Four companies of Girl Guides have been organized. They meet once a week for an hour and a-half. Their programme is varied, including gymnasium work, Red Cross work, first aid, etc. Whenever there is a fifth Monday in the month they have a social evening. Through the Guide law and the Guide promises the leaders try to instil a high sense of honour and a keen sense of responsibility."

In most of the City Associations clubs are organized along generally recognized lines—clubs for business and industrial girls. As a rule they are partly devotional and partly educational. Very often the girls come directly from business or factory to the Association, have a ten-cent supper together, then gymnasium or sewing classes, and end the evening with games. Some of the clubs specialize in dramatic work or getting up a concert, for some special occasion such as Christmas. Sometimes different clubs will take part in choral and other contests. In summer hikes and picnics bring the girls together. Some Associations have recreation grounds where they may go and bowl or enjoy a game of tennis. These clubs are filling a tremendous need, and they are especially necessary at the present time when many of our girls are going into factories as unskilled workers. Their work has but little in it to interest them, and their education ceases unless they are stimulated to effort by an outside organization. It is this stimulus towards self-development that the Association tries to provide through its clubs, and by their varied activities to meet the needs of many different types of girl.

One of our Canadian Secretaries especially gifted in this way has been experimenting with pageants and

initiation series, and is convinced that the charm of symbolism makes a strong appeal to the average girl. This particular secretary has done interesting work in other directions, having been invited by the Public School Board to give a series of lectures on subjects of very practical school interest. She also arranged a series of excellent lectures on "Girls' Work" to be given by several women educationists in the City Association Building.

In still other cities the Young Women's Christian Association has co-operated very closely with the Sunday-schools. This was the result of the expressed desire of the Church leaders in Sunday-school work that the Young Women's Christian Association, being specialists in girls' work, should co-operate with them in planning its future development. This co-operation has been locally worked out in many of our towns and cities; and nationally it has taken the form of "The National Advisory Committee for Co-operation in Girls' Work." In Canada, Sunday-school teachers are beginning to realize that they have a greater responsibility for their girls than merely teaching them one hour on Sunday afternoon; and that, through a carefully thought out programme of mid-week activities the girls will learn that religion should breathe through every act of every day. As Brother Lawrence puts it, "The time of business does not with me differ from the time of prayer; and in the noise and clatter of my kitchen, while several persons are at the same time calling for different things, I possess God in as great tranquillity as if I were upon my knees at the blessed sacrament."

With a view to aiding the teacher, the Committee worked for some time on a programme of mid-week activities, the result of which was the little pamphlet called *Canadian Girls in Training*. It was an attempt to provide a programme for an organized Bible Class, emphasizing activities that would fill in many gaps in the education of the average girl. This year efforts have been directed towards raising a standard for girls, expressing under the four headings, physical, intellectual, religious and social, the ideal after which every girl should strive. Of course it is impossible to divide a girl into distinct parts for she is a blending of many; but it is possible to state certain things which the normal girl should do and know, and this is valuable in providing a working basis for the teachers.

In the Boys' Work of the Y.M.C.A. and Sunday-schools a very elaborate system of "Charting" has been worked out, by which a leader, according to a definite system of marks, may see where a boy stands in each individual standard and help him to develop himself from that point. Girls' workers are not agreed that this would be advisable for girls, or that educationally the principle of giving marks, above all for development of character, is sound. So that before making a final decision the Committee have agreed to wait for more knowledge and a greater experience; and in the meantime to concentrate in an effort to help the teacher to realize her opportunities in developing the "all-round" girl, and to assist her in a practical way by suggesting suitable activities. In certain places, local co-operative committees have already worked out excellent plans. Besides meeting on Sunday afternoon in Sunday-school, the girls meet one evening a week at the Young Women's Christian Association Building. The programme is arranged so as to include Bible and mission study, a practical talk on subjects that every girl should know, such as first aid, home nursing, great composers and their works, Nature Study, etc., and the last hour is given to gymnasium work, when all the classes join together.

Another feature of this co-operation is in Conferences for girls. The idea of gathering teen-age boys together for a day or two to discuss Sunday-school work, to generate enthusiasm in the Sunday-school, and to create a spirit of service has spread very rapidly. In this the Y.M.C.A. have taken a leading part. The girls, too, have had several of these Conferences, and are anxious to hold more, where they may discuss their own problems. In one town in Ontario over 500 girls from the different churches gathered together one Saturday afternoon and evening and Sunday morning and afternoon. From the song service, through the talks, most of which were given by the girls themselves, and discussions following, to the closing address on "The Rediscovery of Women," not forgetting the banquet, held Saturday evening at the Young Women's Christian Association Building, all were packed full of information and inspiration.

These Conferences have proved themselves by results. They give girls an opportunity of considering together essentials, of grasping the idea of service to the Church

and to the community, and of getting practical suggestions as to how this ideal of service may be carried out. And what is of great importance, through managing and planning much of the Conference themselves, the girls are developing initiative, which will make them effective leaders in religious work.

Another feature of Association work is the Residential School. In Canada about fifteen of these have Associations patterned in a simple way after our student organizations in colleges. Their activities and programme vary with the particular school. Some have Bible and mission study classes, others have simply regular general meetings, when topics of Association interest are presented. Practical expression takes the form of definite missionary contribution, and during the war Red Cross work has been done in certain of the colleges.

Many of the girls from our Residential and High Schools attend the Schoolgirls' Summer Camps; a few of the older ones the National Conference at Elgin House, Muskoka. Unfortunately the number of camps is very small at present, and those that we have do not begin to accommodate the girls who are anxious to go; but at least we have evidence that more and more interest is being aroused, and that in the near future camps will be emphasized to a much greater extent.

Many City Associations have held their own Holiday Camps for employed girls, but last summer for the first time the Dominion Council held a Provincial Camp for such girls at Lake Couchiching; about one hundred and forty enjoyed camp for ten days between June and September. In January all campers in or near Toronto gathered together for a banquet and to renew old friendships. The courses were interspersed with most original camp songs, and at the close the girls responded to the toasts, especially the one to "Our Association," with great enthusiasm. An onlooker went away convinced that camp must have been a very happy, wholesome place to cause such a prevailing spirit of fun and good fellowship. An Association Camp, with its healthy and varied activities, fills a need in the life of the out-door, fun-loving girl that nothing else can, and we are hoping that these camps will grow so that in time very many of our Canadian girls will be able to have that happy experience.

Such is the picture, painted largely, of girls' work in Canada. Looking over the Canadian field from the West, with its mountains and wide, open prairies, to the East, with its closer-knit towns and cities, one feels the immensity of it. Canada is so vast! Eight millions of people scattered over that wide area, and in that number many thousands of Canadian girls, who may mean so much or so little to the country. And to-day the call comes to women as never before. The girl of to-day needs an equipment much more comprehensive and more efficient than her grandmother needed half-a-century ago. For the Canadian girl it must fit her for the New Canada which we have faith to believe will arise after the war, and it is the desire and aim of the Canadian Association to furnish some of the important parts of that equipment.

Australasian Girls' Department.

Mary E. Geddes,
Girls' Department Secretary.

THIS is the baby department of the Australasian Association, in that it has been the latest to become organized, and is for girls between the ages of twelve and twenty years. Like all other girls' departments, it has not been long in making itself felt, and although its development began just two years ago, with a membership of 800 odd girls, no other department of our work has met with a more spontaneous response, for to-day the membership numbers at least 1,800 girls under twenty. The increase has been so rapid as to call for the utmost alertness, tact and proficiency, and continued effort on the part of committees, secretaries and leaders, sometimes "walking on tip-toe," so delicate a work is it, to keep the department symmetrical.

On account of the time it takes to build foundations strongly, there will not yet be much superstructure visible, but if the theme of our Association for the next three years, "A summons to a great advance in the light of our

untouched resources in Christ Jesus," be followed there will be no time for loitering by the way.

Problems there certainly are. Australasian girls naturally have their characteristics. In this new and democratic country, where living and climatic conditions are easy and there is much laxity of parental control, there is a general tendency to "ease off." Bright, alert, responsive, warm-hearted, resourceful and independent, and old for their years, they are capable of the very highest. With so much to detract, it requires the wisest leadership that the result may be love for the highest things and for home life. With that end in view, our Girls' Department activities have been planned.

Now as to the actual work as it is to-day. The National Girls' Department, with its Secretary, is responsible for originating plans, suggesting methods, collecting information, and keeping records of local Girls' Departments according to the policy laid down by the National Board. In consequence much of the Secretary's time is spent in the field—Australia and New Zealand. At the outset we recognized that much of the work must be done by volunteer workers, and, therefore, the supreme importance of *trained leadership*, this being the crux of the whole matter. So regular classes for leaders and would-be leaders of clubs and classes in the Girls' Department have been held so that no one should lead the girls who does not understand the aims and ideals of the Association and the leadership of girls under twenty. It is felt that by this method much valuable time and talent will be conserved, making for stability of the whole movement. The Guild of Helpers is the chief recruiting ground within the Association for leaders.

Of the fifteen affiliated Associations eleven have active Girls' Departments in various stages of development, according to a plan of progressive clubs and classes. In these eleven Associations, *Local Girls' Department Committees* have been, and are being, carefully chosen to specialize in knowledge of the adolescent girl and adapt the Association to meet her needs, no mean task, and the result has been most encouraging. Not the least has been the appointment of seven trained secretaries, giving their whole time to the work, in as many cities.

Special Equipment is a realized necessity in order to

reach out to any extent and meet the girl in her many-sided requirements, and the present work demands such. Six Associations have rooms for the exclusive use of the younger members, while one Association in the construction of its building has laid aside a whole floor for the girls' use, including separate locker room, showers and baths, and entrance to gymnasium. This is the ideal in equipment looked forward to in each Association.

Clubs and Classes are many and varied, chief among which is the Hearth-fire movement, similar to the Camp Fire and Girl Guide form of organization. Without doubt this club, progressive in its form, secures the best results, and fulfils the ideal of the Association for the girl as no other club or set of clubs does. All clubs are self-governing and progressive, each step demanding more responsibility with the growth of the girl. They are linked to the Sunday-school, Church, larger Association and community in their interests, that, in the end, all girls may enter the adult Association as electors and not associate members.

In the winter time clubs, war work classes, educational and physical and social activities are in full swing, which in the summer time have their places taken by rowing, tennis, swimming, sports, picnics and camps. War work is done all the year.

Slowly but surely the deeper experience is coming to girlhood through Bible and mission study classes (all clubs have Bible study), attendance at summer camps, special Sunday services for girls (held quarterly or monthly, as the case may be, into which much thought, prayer, and planning have been put). The latest step forward is the representation of girls under twenty at the Summer Conferences of the New Zealand and Australian Associations, where they have their own programme. The results of this step already in evidence show that in attendance at Conferences lies one of the greatest, if not the greatest, sources of strength to the whole department.

As yet there are no specialized departments of work, viz: school-girl work, or business girls' work, as such. That has yet to come, but the prow of the barque is heading on, and, with the Master-hand at the helm, will arrive in port but to set out on more voyages of discovery.

Possibilities of the Girl Guide Movement in India.*

I. J. P. Wingate.

In India we all feel the need of bracing. There is something in the air that makes slacking so painfully easy that unless there is a strong motive before us to keep us up to the mark, we find ourselves becoming lazy and careless e'er we know it.

Perhaps that is one reason why the Girl Guide Movement has taken such rapid hold in India. Its ideals provide just the motive necessary for strong and vigorous living. When the idea was formulated in the mind of Miss Baden-Powell, she had no thought, probably, beyond girls living in the homeland, yet she could not have conceived anything more absolutely suitable for India as to its ideals, if only that part of the Empire had been in her mind. The movement may embrace girls of any race and every class, no distinctions are recognized but those of personal character and achievement; work is something noble, and honour is set before girls as the thing to be prized above all else.

Membership in the Girl Guides is open to all girls between the ages of eleven to eighteen. Among the domiciled community it has already spread widely. All the large centres have companies and some up-country stations have already started. The difficulty hitherto has been to get officers of the right spirit and able to give the necessary time. Anyone young and active with a real love for girls can very soon acquire the necessary knowledge to fit themselves to be a Guide captain.

It is a far more important thing, to begin with, for the leader to be really imbued with the Guide spirit than to have a great deal of technical knowledge. Girls are quick to catch the spirit when the Guide ideals are set before them. "Guide honour" soon becomes a phrase heard constantly on the girls' lips; menial tasks are cheerfully undertaken that would have been scorned under any other circumstances. Many a girl will work hard at some

* Reprinted from *Woman's Outlook in India*, January, 1917.

task she would otherwise have thought impossible and never attempted, in order to pass a test or gain some distinction.

One of the fundamental conceptions of the Guides is unity, and the movement will only develop strongly in India as each local company is closely linked with headquarters and tries loyally to conform to the rules laid down in the Handbook. There is often a great temptation to introduce new regulations or abolish old ones to suit local conditions. Some such modifications must necessarily be made for India as a whole, but unless we all do our best to maintain as much uniformity as possible in these respects in the organization of scattered companies, much strength and mutual helpfulness will be lost, thereby weakening the movement as a whole, and companies will depend too much on the capabilities of individual leaders. The modifications necessary for India only apply to small details, such as uniform and the requirements of some of the tests. Some of these tests are not suitable for India, and others might be devised which would be specially suited to girls in this country. This has already been recognized by the leaders, and as soon as the Presidency Councils and Commissioners are appointed, these things will be taken up thoroughly.

The possibilities of development of the Girl Guides among the domiciled community are unbounded. The only thing that hinders it at present is the difficulty of finding leaders, and if we set our minds to it this can be overcome. Guide Camps to which possible leaders might be invited; the formation of senior companies among older girls who might become captains and lieutenants, leading later on to camps for leaders and a good supply of literature; these are some of the ways in which the difficulty might be got over.

But there is another and a wider question that faces anyone who tries to think out the possibilities of this movement in India. Namely, the admittance of the Indian girls to the ranks of the Guides. Anyone with a knowledge of India recognizes at once that the movement as started in England is unsuitable for wholesale transplantation into Indian soil. But the fundamental conceptions and much of the organization is quite suitable and would be eagerly welcomed by Indian girls. The question is how and in what ways the adaptation is to be made. One very

successful attempt has already been made and the result is the "Girl Messengers" of Lucknow.

The Handbook prepared by Miss Robinson is a fascinating little book, full of ideas, and provides a most useful basis for working out a scheme for an Indian Girl Guide Movement. It only remains for us now to devise some method by which the idea of the "Messengers" may be incorporated into the larger movement, so that there may be only one organization instead of two. It is of the very essence of the Guides that there be no divisions, and very much will be lost if the Indian movement grows up as a separate organization. Not only will it tend to divide instead of uniting the different races in India, but the Indian girls will lose that sense of belonging to a great world-wide organization which is one of the chief sources of strength in the Girl Guide Movement. They must be part of the one great movement which is now found in all parts of our Empire and beyond its borders.

It is an interesting fact that the title of the Girl Guides is taken from the frontier corps of Guides, which is essentially Indian. It would therefore be peculiarly fitting if the same name might be retained for both the English and Indian sections.

Could we obtain the help and advice of some of the older and more thoughtful Indian girls on this question it would go a long way towards a solution of the problem. There must be some who have a certain amount of knowledge of the Guides either in England or India, and if their help could be enlisted it would be of untold value. If the movement does develop among Indian girls we shall also need some of these older girls to come forward as leaders, and we must keep this thought in mind from the start.

Die Muhammedanische Kinderwelt.

von Luise Oehler.

1. Die äusseren Lebensbedingungen.

Nach ungefährer Schätzung beträgt die Zahl aller muhammedanischer Kinder 80 Millionen. Die grösste Zahl, 36 Millionen, hat England in seinen indischen und afrikanischen Besitzungen. Holland hat 14 Millionen; im Balkan mögen es 1,700,000 sein. Angesichts solcher Zahlen könnte man denken, der Islam müsse sich schon durch den Geburtenüberschuss weiter ausbreiten, denn die Zahl der muhammedanischen Kinder, die nicht nur unter christlichen Einfluss kommen, sondern später Christen werden, ist verhältnissmässig noch gering. Aber die Kindersterblichkeit ist in den meisten muhammedanischen Ländern erschreckend gross. In Aegypten kamen im Jahr 1913 auf 75,900 Geburten beinahe 3,000 totgeborene Kinder. Ueber 20,000 starben im ersten, über 9,000 im zweiten Jahr; überhaupt sterben in Aegypten die Hälfte aller Kinder vor Vollendung des fünften Lebensjahres. Wie in Aegypten ist es auch in anderen Ländern. In Palästina gibt es Familien, in denen zwanzig und mehr Kinder geboren werden, von denen aber nur drei oder vier am Leben bleiben. In Persien sollen 85 vom Hundert aller Kinder im zarten Alter sterben.

Die Wohnungen in muhammedanischen Städten sind oft wahre Seuchenherde. Die Muhammedanerin ist Fatalistin und nimmt also an, es sei schon lange vorher bestimmt, ob die Kinder krank werden sollen oder nicht. Ein solcher Glaube ist unter Umständen recht bequem für eine träge, unwissende Frau. Man lässt also Kinder, die ansteckende Krankheiten haben, bei den gesunden in den engen, dumpfen, schmutzigen Räumen, in schlechter Luft und bei mangelhafter oder verkehrter Pflege.

Es ist traurig mitanzusehen, wie z.B. ein neugeborenes Kind (in Kleinasien) mit Salz eingerieben wird, bis die Haut fast abgeht, oder wie ein anderes so fest eingewickelt daliegt, dass es kein Glied rühren kann, während die Fliegen das schmierige Gesichtchen umschwärmen und sich auf die Augen setzen. Und dann wundert sich die

Mutter dass ihr Kind eine Augenentzündung bekommt. Eine Aerztin kam gerade dazu, wie eine Mutter ihrem Kind mit einer glühenden Haarnadel in die Gelenke stechen wollte. Das tue jedermann im Dorf, sagte sie, das mache die Kinder stark.

Die Krankheiten der Kinder kommen nach islamitischer Anschauung von der Einwirkung böser Geister. Man glaubt auch, dass zugleich mit dem Kind ein kleiner Kobold zur Welt kommt, der sich irgendwo im Haus versteckt hält und eifersüchtig wird, wenn das Kind schön und kräftig ist. Auch der böse Blick, vor dem man das Kind zu schützen sucht, spielt eine grosse Rolle.

2. Familie und Erziehung.

Wie verläuft nun das Leben der muhammedanischen Kinder? Im allgemeinen kann man sagen, dass sie von den Eltern geliebt werden, denn sie sind ja eine Gabe Allahs, und keine Kinder zu haben, gilt für ein grosses Unglück. Aber freilich, eine willkommene Gabe sind nur die Knaben; die Mädchen sind mehr ein notwendiges Uebel. Die Verachtung des Weibes liegt wie ein dunkler Schatten schon auf dem Leben der kleinen Mädchen. Und wo eine Frau missachtet und nur zu oft misshandelt wird, wo unter dem Fluch der Vielweiberei und der Ehescheidungen, die der Mann nach Belieben und ohne einen Grund anzugeben vornehmen kann, kein ordentliches Familienleben gedeiht, da fehlt bei der Erziehung der Einfluss der Frau, es fehlt die Pflege des Gemütslebens, des Anstandes, der Zurückhaltung.

Durch die Ehescheidung werden sehr oft -vielleicht sogar meistens- Frau und Kinder dem Elend preisgegeben. Dem Gesetz nach sollte der Mann für die Gestossene und ihre Kinder, die doch auch die seinen sind, sorgen, aber es ist für so eine arme unwissende, weltfremde Frau sehr schwer, sich Recht zu verschaffen. Wenn sie keine Eltern oder sonst Verwandte hat, die sich ihrer annehmen, ist sie ganz hilflos. Manchmal nimmt ihr der Mann die Kinder und damit ihre einzige Freude. Er hat das Recht, die Knaben mit drei Jahren zu sich zu nehmen; die Mädchen dürfen etwas länger bei der Mutter bleiben.

Aber viel trauriger als das äussere Elend sind die geistigen und sittlichen Einflüsse, die auf die Kinder einwirken. Da ist vor allem das schlechte Beispiel. Sie sehen

wie der Vater die Mutter gering achtet, wie er sie schmäht und oft misshandelt. Sie sehen die Eifersucht unter den verschiedenen Frauen, die fortwährenden Zänkereien, das greuliche Ränkespiel, die Verleumdungen, wodurch eine die andre um die Gunst des Mannes und sich selbst an ihre Stelle bringen will. Und, was das Schlimmste ist, alle die Dinge, die das Geschlechtsleben betreffen, werden ganz offen, auch vor jungen Kindern besprochen, so dass kindliche Unschuld und Reinheit sehr schnell verloren gehen. Eine Kindheit in unserm Sinn hat das muhammedanische Kind kaum ; jedenfalls geht sie sehr schnell vorüber, und eine wirkliche Jugend kennt ein solches Kind überhaupt nicht.

Ueber die Erziehung der Knaben sagt das jetzt beim Islam am höchsten geachtete Gesetzbuch: „Am siebten Tag soll man ihn beschneiden ; mit sieben Jahren soll er für Unarten bestraft werden. (Man nimmt an, dass vor Vollendung des siebten Jahres die Kinder für das Böse nicht verantwortlich sein können). Mit dreizehn Jahren soll das Junge mit Schlagen zum Gebet getrieben werden, wenn er nicht freiwillig geht, und mit 16 Jahren soll ihn sein Vater verheiraten."

Viel schlimmer als bei die Knaben sind die Mädchen daran. Bei ihnen hört die Kindheit mit neun oder zehn Jahren, oft noch früher auf. Und sobald sie als erwachsen gelten, fängt man an, einen Freier für sie zu suchen. Aber die kurzen Jahre der Kindheit sind für sie nicht ungetrübt, denn sie erfahren von klein auf, dass sie nur Menschen zweiter Klasse sind, und die Brüder üben bald ihnen gegenüber ein herrisches Wesen. Die Kinderheiraten aber sind ein Uebel, dessen schädliche Folgen gar nicht zu hoch angeschlagen werden können, schon in körperlicher Beziehung, denn die kleinen Frauen, die Kinder bekommen in einem Alter, wo sie noch mit der Puppe spielen sollten, müssen ja jung dahinwelken. Natürlich können sie auch keine kräftigen Kinder zur Welt bringen.

An manchen Orten müssen die kleinen Mädchen, noch ehe sie verheiratet werden, schwer arbeiten, um etwas Geld zu verdienen, wenn dies auch nicht so häufig ist, da es in den muhammedanischen Ländern nicht viel Industrie gibt; aber in Syrien z. B. arbeiten neun- und zehnjährige Mädchen oft dreizehn oder vierzehn Stunden täglich für kargen Lohn in den Seidespinnereien. Besonders traurig

ist es in den Teppichwebereien in Kirman in Persien. Hier arbeiten schon vierjährige Kinder. Sie sind schlecht ernährt und führen ein freudloses, liebeloses, hoffnungloses Leben. Die Fabriken haben keine Fenster, damit die Aufmerksamkeit der Kinder nicht abgelenkt wird. Die schlechte Luft, die mangelhafte Ernährung und das beständige Verharren in derselben Lage machen, dass die Kinder fast alle rachitisch und verkrümmt werden. Ein Statthalter hat es durchgesetzt, dass sie „nur" zwölf Stunden täglich und am Freitag nur morgens früh arbeiten müssen. Die Fabrikbesitzer haben die Kinderarbeit gerne, weil sie billig ist. Und die Eltern? Warum lassen sie das geschehen? In Persien sagt man: „Unter drei Kirmanern sind vier Opiumraucher." Also, die armen Kinder müssen schwer arbeiten, verkümmern und dahinsiechen, damit die Eltern sich das Opium verschaffen können.

Die ersten Worte, die ein so kleiner Knirps lernt, sind oft ein Fluch oder ein Schimpfwort. Und doch werden die Kinder früh zur Frömmigkeit -im islamischen Sinn- angehalten. Sie lernen den Namen des Propheten immer mit dem Zusatz „Gebet und Friede sei mit him" aussprechen. Sie erfahren vieles von den Schrecken der Hölle und reden gerne davon, denn das ewige Feuer ist ja nur für die Ungläubigen, nicht für sie, die Kinder der Gläubigen. Sie lernen Gott kennen als eine Art von morgenländischem Gewaltherrscher, der nach Willkür straft und belohnt und jedenfalls die Ungläubigen zu ewigen Strafen verurteilt. Sie lernen die regelmässigen Gebete und Waschungen vornehmen und während eines Monats im Jahre den Tag über fasten.

Die Gebete müssen alle in Arabisch gesprochen werden, das die wenigsten Kinder verstehen, und wenn vom Minaret der Ruf zum Gebet ertönt, folgt zwar jeder gute Muhammedaner dem Ruf, aber die wenigsten -auch unter den Erwachsenen -wissen, was sie Gott sagen und von ihm erbitten. Der Muhammedaner in China und im vielsprachigen Indien, der Ostafrikaner, der das Kisuaheli redet, der Haussa, dar als Händler Afrika durchzieht und in seiner Sprache für den Islam wirbt, der Türke, der Albaner und viele andere Stämme und Völker, sie reden Sprachen, die mit der religiösen Sprache des Islam nicht einmal verwandt sind. Darum haben auch Lehre und Leben im Islam

keinen inneren Zusammenhang, natürlich abgesehen vom Beobachten der äusseren Formen. Und was die Kinder schliesslich von der Glaubens- und Sittenlehre kennen lernen, ist so unkindlich, so vermischt mit unguten Dingen, dass doch nicht viel Gutes dabei herauskommt.

Für die Mädchen ist die schlechte Erziehung besonders unheilvoll. Eine schwedische Missionarin lernte in Aegypten eine junge Frau kennen, die mit zwölf Jahren verheiratet, von ihrem Mann misshandelt, nach dem Tod ihres ersten Kindes verstossen, dann von ihrem Vater mit fünfzehn Jahren zum zweiten Mal verheiratet wurde. „Es waren, schreibt die Missionarin, merkwürdige Gegensätze in ihrem Gemüt. Sie war klug, gescheit, gereift und erfahren in allem Bösen, aber ein unentwickeltes, unwissendes Kind in allem Guten, Edlen, Wahren und Reinen. Ihrer Seele war alles das genommen, was das Leben lebenswert macht." Das ist der Fall unter tausenden.

Zu den Leiden der muhammedanischen Kinder gehört auch noch die Sklaverei. Der Sklavenhandel hat immer noch nicht ganz aufgehört, und es kann gar nicht gesagt werden, was die zum Verkauf aufgestellten Mädchen zu erleiden haben. Alle Knaben und Mädchen, die einmal in den Händen eines Sklavenhändlers gewesen sind, tragen für immer auf der Wange das Brandmal, das er ihnen aufgedrückt hat.

3. Schule und geistiges Leben.

Der Mangel an Schulbildung in den muhammedanischen Ländern ist auffallend, wenn man bedenkt, dass im Mittelalter der Islam Wissenschaft und Literatur hoch hielt und pflegte, und dass er heute noch seinem heiligen Buch eine fast göttliche Verehrung schenkt. In Afrika sind 85 bis 90 v.H. aller Muhammedaner ohne Schulbildung; in Indien stehen sie noch hinter den Hindu zurück. In Kaschmir haben unter 1,000 erwachsenen Hindu 61, aber unter 1,000 Muhammedanern nur acht Schulbildung, und von 100 Knaben besuchen 14 Hindu und nur zwei Muhammedaner die Schule. Bei den Frauen ist es noch schlimmer. Ein Missionar, der achtzehn Jahre in Kaschmir war, traf in der ganzen Zeit nur fünf oder sechs Frauen, die ein gewöhnliches Buch lesen konnten. In Aegypten kommen nach der neuesten Zählung auf 1,000 Frauen nur drei, die lesen können.

Die Schule ist meistens in der Ecke eines Kaufladens oder in einem Nebenraum der Moschee. Der Boden ist mit Matten belegt; sonst besteht die ganze Einrichtung aus kleinen, zusammenlegbaren Lesepulten. Der Lehrer sitzt auf dem Boden inmitten der Buben jeden Alters. Der vier- bis fünfjährige, der zu Hause das einleitende Kapitel des Koran auswendig gelernt hat und nun in die Geheimnisse des arabischen A B C eingeführt werden soll, sitzt neben den älteren, die schon den Koran lesen können. Es gibt keine Klassen. Alle lernen zu gleicher Zeit ihre Aufgaben her, aber des Lehrers geübtes Ohr hört aus dem Stimmengewirr heraus, wenn in Allahs Buch ein Laut falsch ausgesprochen oder ein Wort ausgelassen wird.

Es gibt überhaupt nicht viele arabische Kinder und Schulbücher. Die vorhandenen stammen teilweise aus sehr alter Zeit. Nach unsern Begriffen sind sie für Kinder ganz ungeeignet. Von einem, das „für Mädchen und Knaben besonders passend" sein soll, sagt Dr. Zwemer, man könne es nicht wörtlich übersetzen, ohne das Gesetz gegen die Verbreitung unsittlicher Schriften zu übertreten.

Bei dem Schulunterricht wird nur das Gedächtnis geübt. Die Schüler lernen durch das fortwährendes Lautlesen den Koran allmählich auswendig, aber Tausende, die es so weit gebracht haben, sind nicht imstande zu erklären, was ein Kapitel in der gewöhnlichen Umgangssprache heisst, ebensowenig könnten sie mit Verständnis eine arabische Zeitung lesen. Auch Grammatik, Logik, Geschichte und Theologie, die sich in dem Stundenplan der höheren Schulen finden, werden rein gedächtnismässig eingepaukt. Verstehen ist unnötig und Nachdenken eher schädlich. Die schönen Künste sind, gemäss dem Gebot des Propheten, aus der Schule verbannt. Nur auf eine Kunst wird Wert gelegt, die arabischen Buchstaben recht schön zu schreiben.

Der Eifer der Muhammedaner, Anhänger anderer Religionen für ihren Glauben zu gewinnen, erstreckt sich auch auf die Jugend. Ein Drittel aller in Afrika geborene Kinder trägt muhammedanische Amulette. Von diesen Kindern gehören eine grosse Anzahl heidnischen Eltern, denen die Amulette von Muhammedanern verkauft werden. Das ist sehr oft der Anfang eines Einflusses, der die ganze Familie dem Islam zuführt. Vielleicht bleiben die Eltern im Herze Heiden, nehmen nur äusserlich die ihnen unver-

ständlichen Formen des Islam an und plappern die Gebete in der ihnen fremden arabischen Sprache; aber die Kinder kommen ganz unter muhammedanischen Einfluss und werden als Anhänger des Propheten oft von Hass gegen die Ungläubigen, d.h. die Christen, erfüllt.

4. Der Weg zur Hilfe.

In den unter europäischer Herrschaft stehenden Ländern wird der Einfluss des Westens und das Streben nach westlicher Bildung allerdings immer wichtiger. Das Volk strebt nach Kenntnissen, weil sie der Weg sind, Regierungsstellen zu erlangen und gute Handelsgeschäfte zu machen; die Regierung fördert den Unterricht, weil sie eingeborene Beamte braucht; der Missionar, weil er dadurch Einfluss auf die höheren Stände bekommen und sie mit dem Christentum bekannt machen kann. Gegner dieser Bestrebungen sind die Priester und die streng Altgläubigen. Sie kämpfen grimmig gegen die europäische Bildung, weil sie, nicht mit Unrecht, fürchten dass sie dem alten Glauben und der Priesterschaft gefährlich sei. Und gerade solche Männer haben noch mächtigen Einfluss auch auf die Kinder. Von Tunis, heisst es, man könne eigentlich den Kindern gar nicht beikommen; von Arabien und selbst von der Türkei schreiben die Missionare, sie hätten die grössten Schwierigkeiten, die Kinder in christliche Schulen zu bringen, und von Aden, die Kinder seien ganz zugänglich, aber vom Christentum dürfe man nicht mit ihnen reden, sonst wurde ihnen gleich von den Eltern der Verkehr mit den Missionaren verboten. Am ängstlichen werden die Mädchen gehütet, und sie sind auch am unzugänglichsten. Oft meinen die Muhammedaner, das freundliche Entgegenkommen der Missionare entspringe der Furcht.

Aber die Schwierigkeiten sind ja kein Grund, nichts zu tun, nur darf man auf keinen schnellen Erfolg rechnen. Was die Schulen anlangt, so kann man muhammedanische Kinder am schwersten in Sonntagschulen bekommen, weil da nur religiöser Unterricht gegeben ist; viel eher kommen sie in gewöhnliche Tagschulen, wo der Religionsunterricht nur einen Teil des Stundenplans ausmacht. Wahrscheinlich hat der ganze Geist der in der Schule herrscht, ebensoviel oder mehr Einfluss als der eigentliche christliche Unterricht. Trotz aller Vorurteile nimmt die Zahl der muhammedanischen Kinder, die Missionsschulen besuchen, zu.

Vielleicht ist jetzt in der Türkei die Lage der Kinder, vor allem der Mädchen, am hoffnungvollsten. Gibt es doch schon jetzt Türkinnen, die sich als Schriftstellerinnen hervortun, und andere, die Medizin studieren. Dies und das Bestreben mancher fortschrittener Männer, die Lage der Frau noch freier zu gestalten, lässt auch für die Zukunft Gutes hoffen.

Weiter als der Einfluss der Schulen reicht überall der der Missionskrankenhäuser. Eltern, die für die geistliche und sittliche Not ihrer Kinder kein Verständnis haben und die die Unwissenheit nicht für ein Unglück halten, werden doch durch die Schmerzen und Leiden der Kleinen getrieben den Missionsartzt oder die Aerztin, aufzusuchen, und die Liebe, die sie da erfahren, ist oft der Weg, die Herzen von Eltern und Kindern mit dem Evangelium zu erreichen. In den Mittelpunkten muhammedanischen Lebens vom Westen Afrikas an bis weit nach Osten in den malaiischen Ländern sind jetzt über hundert gut ausgestattete Missionsspitäler.

Am meisten Einfluss können eingeborene Christengemeinden üben, die natürlich ihre Volksgenossen, deren Sprache sie sprechen, deren Lebensweise im Aeussern vielfach dieselbe ist, viel besser verstehen und von ihnen verstanden werden, als dies bei den Abendländern der Fall ist. Dabei stehen sie doch geistig, sittlich und auch gesellschaftlich höher und zeigen durch ihr Leben die Kraft ihres christlichen Glaubens. So sind z.B. in Aegypten 76 von einer amerikanischen Mission geleitete Gemeinden von eingeborenen Christen, von denen durch Bibelfrauen, Bibelverkäufer und nicht zum wenigsten durch Sonntagsschulen ein Einfluss auf ihre muhammedanische Umgebung ausgeht.—*Vom „Evangelischen Missions-Magazin," Basel, Februar*, 1917.

Femmes Italiennes Pendant la Guerre.

Emma Betts.

Le petit volume "*Guerra nelle Retrovie*" de Carla Cadorna révèle une douce âme de jeune fille, pleine de pieuse poésie alliée à un ardent patriotisme. Il n'y a pas lieu de s'en étonner vu qu'elle est fille de Luigi Cadorna, généralissime de nos armées, auquel l'Italie a confié la grande tâche de revendiquer "les frontières sacrées que la Nature a posées comme confins de la Patrie."* La profonde piété du père, qui n'est un mystère pour personne, a trouvé un écho dans le cœur de la fille et *Dieu* et *Patrie* sont les pensées dominantes du livre.

Carla Cadorna a placé son idéal très haut, elle souffre de voir encore autour d'elle tant de femmes qui n'ont pas encore su se faire une âme de guerre et qui croient qu'en dehors de leurs devoirs de famille et de société, la patrie n'est en droit de rien exiger d'elles. Mais Dieu soit loué! il n'y a pas seulement à critiquer une petite minorité de femmes égoïstes et inconscientes, mais à se réjouir de l'admirable élan avec lequel les femmes italiennes ont répondu à l'appel de la patrie. Celles qui ont donné au front ce qu'elles avaient de plus cher sont justement celles qui travaillent avec le plus d'enthousiasme et de zèle à l'arrière.

Elles sentent profondément que le fait d'être nées femmes ne les exempte, pas plus que les hommes, de se consacrer entièrement à cette patrie adorée, qui, depuis près de 3,000 ans, n'a pas cessé d'être un flambeau au milieu des peuples de l'Europe.

Mais les plus brillantes qualités ont leurs revers et Carla Cadorna voudrait pour ses compatriotes un peu de cet esprit de discipline qui a rendu si fort l'ennemi: "A nous, peuple génial par excellence, la discipline pèse beaucoup et nous la trouvons tout au plus bonne pour les couvents et l'armée. Peut-être il nous semblerait de n'être pas assez *latin* et *génial* si nous n'avions pour loi suprème de ne pas en avoir et de faire tout ce que nous voulons." Mais,

* Proclamation de Victor Emmanuel III. à ses troupes, Mai, 1915.

ce joug, quelque pénible qu'il soit pour sa nature indépendante, l'Italien commence, lui aussi, à le porter, et, par amour pour sa patrie, il est en train de devenir docile.

Dans le chapitre "Aujourd'hui et demain," Carla Cadorna tâche de se figurer ce que sera l'après guerre pour la femme: "Plongées, comme nous le sommes, dans un vertigineux présent, il peut sembler prématuré de regarder l'avenir et de rêver à ce que nous serons demain pendant que nous pouvons à peine nous rendre compte ce que nous sommes aujourd'hui. Mais nous serons demain ce que nous désirons d'être. Et, comme l'espérance de la moisson future fait supporter à l'agriculteur les durs labeurs des champs, le désir d'être assez mûres pour les fécondes œuvres de la paix nous soutient dans les pénibles heures de la douloureuse vie de guerre. Si le jour d'aujourd'hui est pour la femme une épreuve, le jour de demain devra être un progrès."

En Italie l'influence de la femme dans la famille et la société a toujours été grande et aujourd'hui la guerre n'en a fait qu'augmenter l'importance. Evidemment, en fait de conquêtes féministes, nous ne pouvons rivaliser avec nos sœurs d'Angleterre et de France. Les femmes, chez nous, ont pris la place des hommes dans des emplois subalternes, tels que conducteurs de tram, balayeuses des rues, dactilographes dans les Ministères et les banques, employées dans les fabriques de munitions; attributions de genre inférieur, qui n'exigent pas de grandes capacités.

Mais, ce qui est intéressant, c'est de voir ce qui est arrivé dans les familles du prolétariat; l'absence du mari et du père, au lieu de porter le désarroi dans les jeunes familles, les a, pour ainsi dire, mieux ordonnées; les femmes, ayant sur les épaules toute la responsabilité financière, ont su, mieux que les hommes, administrer leur modeste budjet; les gages du Mont de Piété ont étonnement diminué et les caisses d'épargne postales se sont remplies de leurs petites économies. Et penser que, jusqu'ici, la femme mariée était en Italie, une éternelle mineure, qui ne pouvait disposer de rien sans l'autorisation de son mari! Mais, heureusement, cet état de choses va changer; les capacités démontrées par la femme pendant ces deux années de guerre ont enfin ouvert les yeux de nos législateurs et justice leur sera rendue.

Et les femmes et les jeunes filles des classes aisées—

me demandera-t-on que font elles, en Italie, pour la guerre? La réponse est bien simple: ce qu'elles font en Angleterre et en France. La guerre a produit partout les mêmes effets et donné naissance aux mêmes misères, qu'il faut soulager. Œuvres pour l'assistance des familles des soldats, asiles pour les enfants, laboratoires pour les femmes, cuisines populaires, soins des blessés et des malades, rééducation des mutilés. Le champ de travail est immense. Du reste, nos femmes et nos jeunes filles y étaient bien preparées, car, avant la guerre, les œuvres de bienfaisances foisonnaient. C'était devenu un espèce de sport que de consacrer quelques heures par semaine à une institution quelconque: partout des comités, des fêtes, des bals de charité, des représentations au bénéfice de toutes les misères, et la mondanté et le besoin d'amusement y avaient autant de part que le désir de venir en aide à son prochain. La guerre a changé tout cela. Pour subvenir aux nécessités des œuvres plus n'est besoin d'organiser des spectacles, des divertissements; les salles de bal sont fermées depuis 2 ans, et aucune jeune femme ou jeune fille, qui se respecte, ne voudrait les voir se rouvrir, même sous le prétexte d'aider les misérables, avant que nos troupes ne soient retournées victorieuses du front. Bien justement Carla Cadorna écrit: "Si la bienfaisance au son de la grosse caisse est toujours antipathique, aujourd'hui elle est vraiment odieuse et immorale. Elle est une hypocrisie pour qui l'exerce et une insulte pour qui la reçoit."

Mais, à côté de l'aide matérielle, il y a aussi l'aide morale, et elle ajoute: "Avec le renouvellement des sources spirituelles s'ouvre tout un champ de bienfaisance invisible, qui, spécialement dans ces moments-ci, est tout aussi important que la bienfaisance tangible: rallumer l'étincelle dans les âmes où le flambeau de la confiance est éteint, reconduire au sens de la réalité des âmes qu'un faux pessimisme décourage ou qu'un faux optimisme affaiblit. Ne pas dire: l'entreprise est facile, c'est pourquoi nous arriverons; mais plutôt: l'entreprise est rude, c'est pourquoi nous *devons* arriver; ne pas dire: ceci est supérieur à nos forces; mais: élevons nos forces à la hauteur de l'entreprise."

Dans ce vaste champ de travail, si intéressant, de l'aide spirituelle, nous pouvons signaler l'initiative de la *ligue des semeuses de courage*, fondée l'année dernière, à Milan. La

ligue s'adresse surtout aux dames et aux jeunes filles qui habitent la campagne. Celles-ci, étant en contact direct avec les populations rurales, peuvent, mieux que les autres, combattre l'influence néfaste et opprimante des ennemis de la patrie, qui, profitant de l'ignorance et de l'ingénuité des campagnards, tâchent de répandre au milieu d'eux le venin du découragement, le désir impatient de paix à quelconque prix et une indulgence coupable vis à vis des plus horribles délits de l'ennemi. Nos paysannes, déjà si douloureusement atteintes par le départ des hommes de leur famille, se laissent facilement impressionner par la propagande délétère de ces "faux frères," et il faut que, dans ces heures difficiles, elles trouvent d'autres femmes auprès d'elles, qui sachent leur parler d'espérance dans la prochaine victoire et leur fassent comprendre la grandeur de la cause pour laquelle la patrie leur a demandé leurs fils, leurs époux, leurs frères.

Un autre grand devoir de l'heure présente est de limiter ses dépenses. L'existence s'est faite sérieuse et la meilleure partie de la population sent le devoir de mener une vie simple, plus à l'unisson avec les privations que doivent supporter nos troupes qui combattent. Evidemment le grand renchérissement de la vie a obligé les bourses modestes à limiter leurs dépenses, mais la tentation est grande pour les gens riches de ne rien changer à leur genre de vie. Cependant plusieurs d'entr'eux ont courageusement restreint leur train de maison. L'exemple vient de haut et le Roi, au front, aussi bien que les Reines, à Rome, se sont spontanément assujettis à une table des plus frugales. Les Reines se sont, toutes deux, inscrites à la "Ligue Nationale féminine pour la réduction de la consommation" (fondée à Rome en Janvier 1917) et ont, entr'autres, pris l'engagement, qu'elles maintiennent scrupuleusement, de s'abstenir de viande le Jeudi et le Vendredi, de ne manger de plats doux que deux fois la semaine, de ne pas consommer le beurre frais séparément ou comme ajout aux autres substances alimentaires, ni crême de lait, ni œufs comme garnitures d'autres plats, de ne pas avoir à leur table un nombre de plats supérieur à deux pour le déjeuner et à trois pour le dîner. On comprend facilement le changement et le désarroi que ces différentes limitations ont dû apporter à la table royale, mais nos Reines comprennent que l'exemple doit être donné d'en haut et que

" royauté oblige 'surtout' royauté démocratique " comme la nôtre.

L'économie est devenue une vraie obligation morale. Au début elle peut sembler un peu dure, car économiser veut dire sacrifier quelque chose de son confort, renoncer à des habitudes invétérées, mais, comme le dit Sofia Bisi-Albini, l'écrivain bien connu " on éprouve ensuite comme un sentiment de fraîcheur, de libération."

Dora Melegari, dans son dernier ouvrage " Le livre de l'espérance " fait des vœux pour que ce nouvel état de chose ne soit pas simplement passager, mais devienne une des conquêtes durables apportées par la guerre. En effet, la vie, dans ces dernières années, s'était singulièrement compliquée de besoins aussi nombreux qu'inutiles, et que, seule, la richesse aurait pu raisonnablement se permettre. On supportait, en secret, de nombreuses privations, pour pouvoir extérieurement rivaliser avec ceux qui s'abandonaient aux caprices du luxe et de la mode.

Ceci, en outre, augmentait d'une façon impressionnante le culte de " Mammon," et la plupart des gens ne voyaient d'autre but à la vie que d'arriver au plus grand bienêtre matériel et extérieur. Ah ! puisse la grande épreuve que nous traversons nous redonner une plus vraie vision des choses, remettre en honneur " la vérité " sous toutes ses formes et nous convaincre que l'important n'est pas ce que nous paraîssons être extérieurement, mais ce que nous sommes réellement.

Un autre point de l'activité féminine, qui est certainement des plus intéressants, soit pour l'utilité du moment présent, soit pour les bienfaisantes conséquences qu'il ne manquera pas d'avoir après la guerre, est l'œuvre des infirmières. Cette œuvre doit être prise en considération non seulement à cause de ses résultats pratiques, mais, plus encore, à cause de sa valeur morale. Elle marque un grand progrès dans l'évolution de la femme italienne. Quand on pense à la vie frivole et vide de la plupart de nos jeunes filles avant la guerre, vie de dépendance, dépourvue de toute liberté, qui, en les conservant éternellement enfants, les rendait incapables d'affronter les luttes de la vie sans l'aide et l'appui d'un homme, et qu'on voit, maintenant, la profonde transformation que ces existences ont subie, on ne peut faire à moins de penser que cette guerre, qui a couté aux femmes tant de larmes, leur a

pourtant été salutaire. Elle leur a donné confiance en elles-mêmes et une dignité qu'elles ne connaissaient pas auparavant. Car, ces jeunes filles, qui se contentaient d'une réunion d'amies, d'une promenade dans des lieux fréquentés où elles pouvaient étaler leurs grâces et leurs élégances, d'un thé, d'un bal, toujours sous l'œil vigilant de la mère, et subissaient ce train—train comme une necessité inhérente à leur condition de femme, ont senti, elles aussi, le frémissement d'enthousiasme qui passait sur tous les cœurs italiens au début de notre seconde guerre de rédemption. Quand nous avons vu nos frères, nos amis, nos compagnons de jeunesse et d'amusements partir avec une lumière nouvelle dans leurs yeux, avec un amour nouveau dans le cœur, fiers d'être jeunes, sains et forts pour pouvoir offrir davantage à la patrie, nous avons été secouées par un sentiment jusqu'alors inconnu, et nous avons éprouvé non pas le regret et l'humiliation d'être femmes et inutiles, mais le besoin et la volonté d'employer toutes nos forces et nos énergies, qui s'éveillaient tout d'un coup en nous, à ne pas nous montrer indignes de la meilleure partie de la nation, qui, avec tant de courage et de sérénité, allait au devant de la mort.

Les débuts n'ont pas été faciles, et les jeunes filles ont dû beaucoup lutter contre les craintes et les prejugés des parents, les idées fausses de leur entourage, la malveillance et souvent l'ironie générale. Mais elle n'ont pas fléchi, et, peu à peu, ont réussi à arracher toutes les concessions: d'abord les cours d'instruction, ensuite le service dans les hôpitaux de leurs villes, puis, successivement, des missions toujours plus importantes, et, finalement, la grande victoire: l'hôpital de camp, où les premières et les plus courageuses furent bientôt suivies d'un nombre toujours plus grandissant de compagnes.

Au commencement, accueillies avec méfiance et presque avec hostilité, elles surent par leur sérieux, leur bonne volonté, leur douceur et leur soumission, acquérir peu à peu le respect et l'estime générale, en sorte que, fort peu nombreux sont, aujourd'hui, ceux qui méconnaissent les mérites des infirmières volontaires; et les médecins et les patients leur prodiguent des louanges unanimes. Et c'est jusque dans les hôpitaux, les plus avancés, que sont arrivées nos jeunes filles, là où les obus de l'ennemi ne respectent même pas le symbole sacré de l'humanité souffrante. Dans

les moments les plus tragiques leur courage n'a pas fléchi, fortes, comme elles étaient, du sentiment de leur mission, qui les rendait, les plus jeunes, non moins que les autres, comme autant de mères au chevet de leurs enfants souffrants. Et que dire des hôpitaux des maladies contagieuses, où les infections les plus dangereuses récèlent un péril encore plus terrible que les balles ennemies!

Rien n'a arrêté ces apôtres de la charité et de l'amour, et les citations *à l'ordre du jour* ne se comptent plus. Plusieurs d'entre elles ont été décorées de la médaille *à la valeur militaire*.

L'organisatrice admirable du service des infirmières, dans la Zone de guerre, à été S.A.R. la Duchesse d'Aoste, née d'Orléans, dont le mari commande une armée à notre front. Depuis le commencement de la guerre la Duchesse a quitté son palais, sur les bords enchanteurs du golfe de Naples, pour se consacrer complètement au soin des blessés. Partout où le travail est le plus rude, où le plus grand besoin d'aide et de consolation se fait sentir, apparaît l'élégante silhouette de cette noble femme, sur la poitrine de laquelle brille la médaille d'argent à la valeur militaire.

Je ne puis terminer cet article sans exprimer un respectueux hommage à nos deux Reines, *Elena et Margherita de Savoia*, qui consacrent aux blessés toute leur activité et les plus délicates pensées de leurs nobles cœurs. La première a installé dans son palais du Quirinal le plus parfait des hôpitaux, dans les magnifiques salles de bal et les somptueux salons sont maintenant alignés les lits des blessés. Elle a voulu spécialement accueillir nos glorieux mutilés, qui, sous sa maternelle surveillance, voient leurs plaies guérir, leur santé et leurs forces lentement revenir, apprennent de nouveaux métiers adaptés à leurs nouvelles conditions, reprennent confiance eux-mêmes et dans la vie. C'est à Elle qu'ils devront d'être, dans l'avenir, des hommes non inférieurs à ce qu'ils étaient dans le passé, si ce n'est meilleurs encore.

L'autre, la Mère de notre Roi (qui, lui aussi, depuis le premier jour de la guerre fait au front la vie du soldat) a ouvert pour soldats et officiers une délicieuse villa, enfouie dans la verdure et les fleurs de son magnifique parc, où, sous le doux ciel de Rome, les blessés passent de longues heures, retrempant leurs forces et leur esprit au milieu de

cette luxuriante nature. Il n'y a pas de jour, où la noble femme ne se plaise à visiter ses hôtes bien aimés. Et aucun de ceux-ci ne repart, guéri, sans recevoir de ses royales mains un souvenir, qui sera parmi les plus chers de sa vie, car il lui rappellera "le moment glorieux" de son existence, l'heure où il a versé son sang pour la patrie.

Rome, *Mai*, 1917.

Domestic Service—A Kingdom for God.

Edith E. Overton.

"THE kingdom of God on earth is not a metaphor, not a mere spiritual state, not a dream, not an uncertain project—it is the thing before us" (H. G. Wells), and here I venture to submit that there is no larger sphere of human activity awaiting redemption and conquest for God than that of domestic service. We cannot conceive of modern life without paid help in the economy of the home; we must admit the discontent of mistress and maid. Yet with complacent listlessness we let the ranks of the servant class grow thin, we watch girls go off in their thousands to other kinds of work, obviously less healthy, less educative, less useful socially, and though we incessantly deplore the inconvenience of no servants or bad servants, we give almost no time to thought, conference or experiment upon the problems of household employment. Is it too much to hope that among problems of reconstruction this, of such vital importance to the home, to the child, the aged, the invalid, will be given adequate and unprejudiced consideration? At least there is a call to our own Association! In its borders are an army of workers and committee members representing the employers of domestic labour, and an army, too, of girl members to voice the opinion of the employées. Surely the Association should be able to afford a meeting-ground for frank investigation into the causes of the boycott of domestic employment, into the grounds of prejudice and distrust which spoil the relationship of

mistress and maid, and the terrible soreness and misunderstanding which is revealed when a discussion of the servant question is opened up. It will call for judgment and a spirit far removed from snobbery, the spirit of love, which despises not one of these little ones.

As an Association caring for the well-being of all classes of young people, we have no excuse for shirking. Under the census of 1911, in England alone, the returns showed 417,000 servants under twenty years of age, and 39,000 only thirteen and fourteen years of age.

Two investigations are commended to your notice. The First Report of the Commission on Household Employment from the Young Women's Christian Association of the United States, dated 1915, and a small book (1/3 net) "Domestic Service," the work of the Women's Industrial Council of Great Britain, dated 1916. Both set out primarily to examine the boycott of household work through the opinions of the very persons who are creating it, believing that the situation cannot be changed until people understand the causes underlying this depleted labour-market, the causes which point the way to remedies being deliberately isolated and emphasized. The advantages and disadvantages of household work are discussed by servants and ex-servants and set in contrast to those of the factory and the shop and the office. The encouraging feature of both reports is that no single objection is alleged to the work itself. If housework had some inherent fault and drawback there might be no hope; but conditions can be remedied and not a few workers have a clear mind about reform.

Summarizing the opinions of the maids themselves we get for *advantages*: (1) Healthiness; (2) Good Wages; (3) Preparation for Married Life; and for *disadvantages*: (1) Long and Uncertain Hours; (2) Loss of Opportunity for Social Life and Self-development; (3) Servile Treatment and Social Stigma. These disadvantages are universally felt, and claim the attention and endeavour of all who desire a peaceable settlement of the servant problem.

(1) There is a very widespread desire for definite limitation of working hours. In old days the idea of service was that the maid became part of the family and shared its life, its work and leisure. Clearly this relationship is much abused, and we know of young maids and

"generals" in large private houses and in boarding houses who are at work seventeen hours day after day with an outing for four hours once a week. Examining all the replies from girls in the United States and in England, we get suggestions of very great similarity:

(1) A working day of ten to twelve hours.
(2) Two hours' rest with perfect freedom of action each afternoon.
(3) One afternoon each week, not returning for the evening meal.
(4) A part of each Sunday.
(5) Opportunity to attend evening affairs regularly.

In institutions and houses of professional and serious people such an arrangement is not impossible. The difficulties seem to arise where the household work waits on a pleasure-seeking and undisciplined family life, where hours and meals are irregular and much service is demanded in unexpected and capricious ways. "Most maids could accomplish more work in less hours if they had regular hours." "Girls get broken up quicker in domestic work than in any other, for the simple reason they are worked such long hours without time for rest, recreation and study which every human being needs" are opinions given by two housemaids.

(2) The universal opinion is that the factory girl has a better time than the maidservant, has a higher social standing, mingles with people on an equal footing and has more chance to marry well. One girl writes: "A factory girl goes out evenings, meets more people generally, is not backward, old-fashioned or bashful;" and from a maid we have the interesting reply: "You mix with refined people, but you are not supposed to copy them, but to keep your place as a servant;" and another reply, which ought to be a challenge to every Christian mistress, affirms: "A domestic servant is treated as an inferior until she feels inferior." This argument against domestic service looms large in the answers given—and who does not know servants who are terribly dull and lonely, shut up to the companionship of one or two other domestics, a chance chat with the laundry man and a few patronizing remarks from one of the family. Who thinks of the little maid of fourteen who eats all her meals alone and must never skip or let off steam and have a good time? Some suggestions made sound sensible,

e.g., that a girl should be allowed to see her bedroom and and kitchen premises and other servants and to make enquiry about the family life before she undertakes to share it; that some sitting-room, other than the kitchen, should be provided where a girl may entertain her friends, that she should be encouraged to attach herself to educational and social circles, and to take an intelligent interest in all questions which affect the community. It should be possible in every house for a maid to have callers—it is her inaccessibility which makes it difficult for her to be invited to classes and clubs, for the minister to call, or any friend or person on business. A maid's life and work cannot be forced to coincide, and it is time that more employers discovered that a servant who lived a larger life would come to give a larger service. In a chapter worthy of study on the problem of the entry into domestic service and the difficulties of suitable training occurs the statement "The problem of domestic service would, or might, be greatly simplified if the school-leaving age were raised to fifteen."

Remember that the servants of the future are leaving school before they are old enough for service or fit to begin training. Add to this the fact that service is the one calling open to the feeble-minded girl and one begins to see how a mist of prejudice has grown up and a charge of inefficiency been fastened upon the whole class. One girl says, "An office girl will have a better appreciation of money values and will make the most practical wife," and this could well be avoided if all the expenditure and economy of a small household were shared by mistress and maid, and if the mistress did not keep to herself all the educative and more interesting departments of the housekeeping. Service could be an education if both mistress and maid were on good terms and mutually anxious to share experience and to give and take that each might live the good life in her own way. Is not ideal service both self-discipline and free?

(3.) The social stigma which attaches to domestic service looms large in the minds of all the wage-earning girls, who comment on the causes of the taboo of domestic employment. The American report sums up the problem as follows: "A household worker sells her person for twenty-four hours a day for seven days a week, and as part of her remuneration is granted the privilege of an hour here

and an hour there, a half-day a week perhaps, if it does not inconvenience the employer. Granted that her work is light, that half the time she does nothing, still her life, her person, is at the disposal of the employer. As long as a person must have all her living conditions, her social life, her entertaining, her educational and spiritual development at the suffrance of the employer there will be abundant occasion for servile treatment and the social stigma." It seems as though a rearrangement of household work must be made so that it would be possible for a maid to sell her labour for a definite sum for a definite quantity of efficient work, so that she may have at least equal opportunity with an office or factory girl to live a self-directed personal life. Experiments in daily service, in training charwomen, in a "living-out" system, are being made under pressure of necessity, and under war conditions hundreds of households have curtailed all desultory service, such as answering the front door, continual carrying of hot water, and all demands upon maids which keep them in semi-idleness yet at the call of the family. Co-operative housekeeping and the use of labour-saving devices, and, above all, simplicity and regularity, will help to lessen the drudgery of the servant and leave more scope for skilled work.

Again and again the fact has been emphasized that a far larger number of prostitutes come from the servant class than from any other in the community. We believe ourselves that the cause lies in an attitude of mind which is a survival of the days of slavery, that the insistence upon a stereotyped code of meekness, obedience and subservience has led many a servant to hold herself cheap. She even seeks the companionship of the overbearing and the bully and becomes an unresisting prey to the man who in dress and speech is like her master. There are simple ways of adding dignity to an office, and there is need that every Christian master and mistress should use ingenuity in the discovery of ways by which the office of servant shall be honoured in the home and no maid be allowed to lose her sense of personal worth and right to freedom and opportunity for development.

If we of the Young Women's Christian Associations of the world believe that the Christian spirit has in it a catholicity which renders it capable of permeating, dominating and transfiguring every relationship within the secular

order, shall we not set our minds to the vision of "so things should be" until the will responds with the intention "so things shall be." When both employer and employée bring to bear imagination and goodwill in all sincerity upon the servant problem these obvious disadvantages will be cleared away, and domestic service may be seen as an honourable calling in every Christian community.

Reviews of Books.

Women in the Apostolic Church. By the Rev. T. B. ALLWORTHY, B.D. Published by W. Heffer & Sons, Cambridge. 1917. Pp. 148. Price 3s. net.

This critical study of the evidence in the New Testament for the prominence of women in early Christianity should certainly be read with care by those interested in the question of the status of women in the Church to-day. We only regret it could not be recommended side by side with "Woman and the Church," by the Rev. H. B. Streeter and Miss Picton-Turbervill, which was reviewed at some length in our April number.

After showing that "while it cannot, without exaggeration, be said that early Christianity was primarily a women's movement, there is no doubt that women formed a considerable part of the membership of the Church from the first," the writer systematically examines every mention made of women in the Gospels, the Book of the Acts and the Epistles. His treatment is unbiassed and most interesting, as well as supported by many references to the early fathers and modern critics of various schools. The conclusion is that, "as a matter of fact, there was no distinction of sex in the Apostolic Church," and, "above all, their rightful place in the Church was secured to women by the bestowal upon them in equal measure with men of those gifts of the Spirit over which the Church itself had no control."—E. I. M. B.

The Jesus of History. By T. R. GLOVER, M.A.; with foreword by the Archbishop of Canterbury. Published by Student Christian Movement. London. 1917. Price 3s. 6d. net.

"Mr Glover" (to quote the Archbishop's foreword) "possesses the rare power of reverently handling familiar truths or facts in such manner as to make them seem to be almost new." In this book Mr Glover's powers of graphic description, sympathetic insight, and vivid interpretation, are used to produce a study, which is far ahead of all his earlier writings. Every line of "The Jesus of History" forces us to realise with deeper understanding and more living imagination the personality of Jesus Christ and to grasp the significance of the familiar words of the Gospels. The attitude of the writer is well depicted in his own words: "The first thing that we need to learn, if our criticism of Jesus is to be sound, is that we are not at all so near Him as we have imagined. He eludes us, goes far out beyond what we grasp or conceive; and I think the education of the Christian man or woman begins anew when we realise how little we know about Jesus. . . . . Plato long ago said that wonder is the mother of philosophy, and he was right. . . . . When a man begins to wonder about Jesus Christ in earnest, Jesus comes to be for him a new figure." This is not a book to be summarized, for its value lies in its own words: it is a book to be read by everyone who can lay hands on it. It stimulates thought, stirs up the imagination, and sends the reader back to the Gospels with the feeling that they must all be read afresh.

Chapter I. gives a short discussion of the historicity of Jesus, and lays down canons for the study of an historical figure.

Chapters II. and III. deal with the childhood and youth of Jesus, and with the characteristics of His mind when He reached manhood. These chapters make very vivid the background of Jesus' daily life in the village and the country and the small Oriental town.

Chapter IV. shows Jesus in His relations with His disciples, the background of their lives and thought, the way He got to know them and changed them. "The Gospel began with friendship, and we know from common life what that is, and how it works. . . . Stage by stage, as one comes to know one's friend, by unconscious and freely-given sympathy, one lives the other man's life, sees and feels things as he does, slips into his language, and by degrees into his thoughts, and then wakes up to find oneself, as it were, remade by the other's personality, so close has been the identification with the man we grew to love. This is what we find in our own lives; and we find it in the Gospels. . . . . Augustine is right: "One loving spirit sets another on fire."

Chapter V. examines Jesus' teaching about God, speaking in simple language without theological obscurity.

Chapters VI. and VII., which deal with Jesus' attitude towards man and His teaching about sin, are in some ways the most illuminating in the book. "Jesus had no illusions about men. . . . A man, who steadily looks forward to being crucified by the people he is trying to help, is hardly one of the absent-minded enthusiasts, mis-called idealists. There never was, in fact, one who so thoroughly looked through his friends, who loved them so much and yet without a shade of illusion."

These chapters lead up to the next one, which speaks of the choice of the Cross and the motives which led to it, and then of its justification in the Resurrection, and, finally, of its meaning for human life.

The book ends with two chapters, one showing the effect of the life and death of Jesus on the Pagan world of His day—"the utterly inconceivable absurdity of this bunch of Galilean fishermen . . . setting out to capture the world. . . . Yet the dream has come true. . . . Where is the old religion?" The other chapter sums up the place of Jesus in Christian thought. "Jesus Christ came to men as a great new experience. He took them far outside all they had known of God and of man. . . . Who was this Jesus that He should produce this result? Men asked themselves that very early. . . . The result has been nineteen centuries of endless question and speculation as to Jesus Christ."

Those who know Mr Glover's books will find him here at his best: those to whom he is new will wish to read more of him. The book is written for individual reading, but suggestions for group-discussion are included in an appendix.

D. IVENS.

Towards a New Way of Life. Published by Student Christian Movement, 93, Chancery Lane, London, W.C. 1917. Price 4d.

Seven reviews by way of help to those who desire to review their customary manner of life with a view to rededication of themselves to God's service. Each section consists of (1) a meditation upon the things revealed, given or commanded by God, (2) an examination of our customary attitude and practice, (3) a resolution to amend our life in those respects in which our fault is shown to us and in which the right way is afresh revealed. The booklet will be very helpful for the Retreat method of corporate prayer.

Studies in Psalms. By the Rev. J. E. McFadyen, D.D. Published by Student Christian Movement, 93, Chancery Lane, London, W.C. 1916. Price 1s. 6d. net.

Daily studies covering ten weeks on Psalms i, xi, xxiii, xxxix, xlviii, xlix, lii, xc, xci, cxxvi and including subjects for united as well as personal meditation. Critical questions are left aside and the studies will serve the hard-pressed worker with many inspiriting thoughts on the spiritual life.

A Pageant of the Church. By G. B. FORMAN and M. E. STONE. Published by National Board Y.W.C.A., 600, Lexington Avenue, New York. 1917. Price 30 cents.

The poetic drama of "The Wayside Piper," by Miss M. S. Edgar, which symbolised the appeal of the Y.W.C.A. to the hearts and minds of girls, has been succeeded by this "Pageant of the Church." Its authors only claim that it is "an unpretentious attempt to meet the need among girls of high school and college age for a method of presenting Church history that will catch the imagination and awaken the desire to share in the corporate life of the Church," but it is a very striking method, and we hope many will procure the booklet. With the exception of Episode VI., "The Church in America," which would need adaptation for other countries, the pageant would appeal to young woman of every nationality. The other episodes are The Apostolic Church; the Early Church; the Beginning of the Church in Britain; the Mediæval Church (1) St. Catherine of Siena; (2) St. Francis of Assisi; and the Church in Reformation. Full directions as to dress and such simple scenery as is required are given, and also a number of hymns for choral singing are chosen. The whole pageant works out a number of ideas as to recreative methods discussed in the last number of the "QUARTERLY," and would certainly prove attractive to large audiences of young spectators if attempted.

The Ordeal of the Church: a Witness for the Time.

The Calling of the Church. By HUGH MARTIN, M.A. Published by Student Christian Movement, 93, Chancery Lane, London, W.C. 1917. Price 6d. each.

These booklets present the appeal for Church membership to young people of both sexes, and especially the message of the second one is strong and likely to find a hearing. It consists of addresses first given at a missionary Summer School: the Creation, the Task, the Gospel of the Church, the Church that is to be and Our Duty to the Church. No particular denomination is emphasised, nor any special form of Church work.

The Girls' Year Book. By a Group of Friends of Girls. Published by National Board Y.W.C.A., 600, Lexington Avenue, New York. 1917. Price 50 cents, cloth.

Some thoughts, prayers and Bible Readings for every day in the year, put together in a very attractive form, "to answer the question found in the heart of every girl who wants to find God in her world: 'Where shall I begin?'" Especially the sections "To know Him" (January 1—February 29) by Oolooah Burner and "The Ways of Prayer" (July 1—August 14) by Elizabeth Clark, seem to have caught the right approach to a girl's mind. "Being Friends" (October 15—November 30), by Margaret Burton, touches on many practical questions in the religious life that is just beginning to express itself.

Outline Missionary Lessons on China, India, Japan, Persia. Published by the Young People's Department, Church Missionary Society, London. 2d. each set.

A very carefully prepared series of outline lessons for (1) *Bible Classes* (*i.e.*, young people from 14 years of age upwards), (2) *the Middle School*, and (3) *the Infant School*, has been issued by the Church Missionary Society on the countries above named. Each pamphlet contains six lessons, and in each case books are recommended for the teacher's private reading. We warmly commend the series to our readers who will, we are sure, find many suggestions of a general character as well as hints as to the presentation of the work of any society in which they are specially interested. The pamphlets on Persia are particularly to be studied at the present time, and are quite general in their treatment.

The Story of Islam. By T. R. W. LUNT. Published by the United Council for Missionary Education. London. 3rd edition (revised). 1916. Pp. 216. Price 1s. 9d., post free.

This was originally written as a study text book for public and secondary schoolboys, but it has reached a very varied constituency, including many girls in high schools, secondary schools, and young people's societies generally. We therefore take the opportunity of recommending the new edition specially to Girls' Club leaders and Bible Class teachers.

At this time, when the Moslem World is coming more and more under the influence of Christian rulers, young people in particular should be encouraged to understand what "Islam" really means. The story of Mohammed is first told, then the spread of Islam is outlined, and the book closes with the challenge of Islam to the Christian Church to-day. The heart-rending challenge of the sufferings at the hands of Moslems of the Armenians, the Syrians and the Jews in the Near East is echoing throughout the world at the present time; would that the challenge to love and win those enemies of the Cross might also be heard in many young Christian hearts so that in due time, when again missionary work is possible, there shall be a great army of recruits for missions to the Moslem world. At the close of the present war the Near East is bound to be one of the most compelling of all the non-Christian regions of the world in its demand for more missionaries. This book is well calculated to call some of them into the service. E.I.M.B.

An African Trail. By JEAN KENYON MACKENZIE.

African Adventurers. By the same. Published by the Central Committee on the United Study of Foreign Missions, West Medford, Mass., U.S.A. Price 30 cents each (paper), 50 cents (cloth).

These study text books for 1917-18 (Senior and Junior respectively) are unique in the vividness with which they are written, and are bound to create interest wherever they are read. Miss Mackenzie's literary style has won for her a place in "The Atlantic Monthly," which published a series of letters from her in 1915, now issued in book form under the title "Black Sheep." These letters created such interest that the editor asked permission to print two chapters of "An African Trail," which was readily granted for November and December, 1916. For fascinating detail and direct appeal the books mark a new era in the history of mission textbooks; indeed, that is almost the last title to be applied to either! They are word pictures appealing from the very heart of Africa to the heart of every reader who handles them. We hope they will reach many beyond the United States.

"*An African Trail*" is a book about a neighbourhood in equatorial Africa, about a Bantu tribe in that neighbourhood, and about an adventure, "an African adventure which repeats itself wherever the Word of God makes entrance into a neighbourhood of these forests and addresses itself to those tribes." The account falls into six chapters: The White Man in Africa, the Bulu, the Bulu and God, the Ten Tyings, the New Tribe and the New Custom, and the last two are intensely interesting.

They describe "the Tribe of God" among the Bulu, as the Christians are called, and make one realise the new life, as indeed from the dead, which is seen among the converts. "The Living Forces of the Gospel," of which Dr. Johann Warneck has written on the strength of his experience among the Animist people of the East Indies, are here demonstrated among the fetish worshippers of Africa. In particular, there is much information about the life of Bantu women both before and after their conversion to Christianity. We can quote but one paragraph to show the vivid style in which the book is all written: "Yes, they triumph as wives. Their heathen husbands praise their virtues in the palaver houses. They have new customs of honesty, purity, diligence. They strive to hold their tongues. They are the best monitors over wild young brides. They do not run away except where hunger for the Word of God drives them to make a journey to some gathering of the people of

the tribe of God; and from these journeys they return without scandal. More headmen than Wanji have said of a Christian wife, 'The doing that she does makes me marvel at the power of God.' "

"*African Adventures*" is the story of a pair of Bulu brothers who become village teachers among their own people. It is quaintly told in language fascinating to children and into their lessons comes the great story of Livingstone narrated as from the African point of view. It will all make real to children the way the Church is growing in Africa, and surely kindle a love for our African fellow-members in the body of Christ.

E.I.M.B.

The Christian Movement in the Japanese Empire: 1916. Edited by J. L. DEARING. Published by Conference of Federated Missions in Japan. Price 5s.

This valuable year-book includes, this year, besides its usual reports of the Missions and Church in Japan, Korea and Formosa, a specially interesting *Survey of Village Life in Japan* and also chapters by Japanese contributors on the *Student Boarding Houses and Hostels in Tokyo* and *Child Life in Japan.*

The Survey of Village Life is based on the investigations of more than a score of missionaries, and a similar number of Japanese workers, to whom a questionnaire was sent asking for a survey of a few representative villages in their section. The report covers 25 prefectures and over 100 villages, and is thus indicative of the problems of village life in the Empire as a whole. They are classed under the headings (1) Educational Conditions, (2) Sanitary, Industrial and Social Conditions, (3) Moral and Religious Conditions, and each chapter is valuable for those who seek to appreciate the present tasks more particularly of the Women Workers of Japan.

Despite the shadows in the picture presented, and they are indeed dark in many places, it is at least encouraging to realise that Japan is by far the first of Oriental nations as regards education, *e.g.*, "Full provision is made for giving *all* the children in rural Japan at least six years of primary education with additional work for two or more years for those desiring it in higher primary or advanced courses. Two-thirds of the teachers in the primary schools are duly certificated, and of the whole number 25 per cent. are women and 75 per cent. men. Practically all the nation is at school from six to twelve years of age, boys and girls alike, and about 50 per cent. of the adult village population have had the equivalent of a six years' primary school course." This makes it at once evident that the work of the foreign missionary, whether under the Missionary Society, Y.M.C.A., and Y.W.C.A., is very different from that in many parts of the East. Doubtless such foreign workers are still to be found mainly in the cities, but in that they there work largely amongst those who are or will become the teachers and other leaders of the mass of the nation, their influence is very far-reaching, and Japan should receive our very best as reinforcements for the present sadly inadequate staff of Christian workers from abroad. Especially those with the trained and sympathetic eye for social problems would seem called for, and those who will associate themselves closely with Japanese Christian social reformers, sharing all they can of Western ideas but content to see them adapted almost beyond recognition if need be. E.I.M.B.

The Day School Teacher and Missions. By CONSTANCE E. PADWICK. Student Christian Movement, 93, Chancery Lane, London, W.C. 2d. net.

While written for British readers, this booklet is of true international value. It presents an appeal to the teacher both "to occupy the high status that is rightly his in the work of the Christian Church" at home and abroad and to realise the almost unworked mine at his disposal in the story of foreign missions. Many practical suggestions are given as to the missionary possibilities in the Bible Half-Hour, Moral Instruction periods, Geography and History Lessons, and Handwork, together with some hints as to books for school libraries.

Association and General News.

AUSTRALASIA.—Miss Aldyth Quaife wrote on behalf of Miss Barnes on March 20th:—"We have had glorious *Summer Conferences* this year, first in New Zealand in January, and the second in February in Australia. Nearly 200 girls and women have shared in that wonderful experience, the Conference spirit, this year. The first was not so great in numbers, but the spirit and teaching was fine; and at our Australian Conference we had 120 delegates, and the ten days were full of inspiration, and fun, and happiness. The last evening of the Conference we had a Farewell Meeting, and scores of the delegates testified to what the Conference had meant to them, and what they mean to do of work for Jesus Christ during the coming days of home and business life. We know, from the result of past conferences, that our gatherings in New Zealand and Australia will mean much growth in personal character, and a widening out of the work of the Association everywhere."

The Association and Thrift Week.—"The Association has always stood for the encouragement of saving. The magnificent sum saved by girls in Adelaide in 1916 as the result of many years' patient specialisation in thrift clubs in the city workrooms is one example of this, while the National Y.W.C.A. contests in October last year showed what might be accomplished in a limited period.

"Our classes in millinery and dressmaking have helped many a girl to make both ends meet, and we are justly proud of the management of our hostels and our mid-day lunch rooms. But war time, with its searching problems, is forcing us to think long thoughts, and we trust that Thrift Week will fill us with new visions of helpfulness to girls and women.

"The idea of Thrift Week originated at a Conference of the Central Council of the Legion of Honour, at which Lady Helen Munro-Ferguson presided, in October last, and Women's Societies in four States are co-operating to make it a success. Bookstalls and libraries are being searched for information on the subject; old newspaper files turned up, and leaflets published by the League of Honour and Commonwealth Patriotic Association. In New South Wales the Savings Bank is issuing a special pamphlet on the value of saving, and the Committee hope to distribute twenty thousand copies. A series of lectures on National, Municipal, and Personal Economy is being planned for Thrift Week. The aim of the campaign is to educate. . . . The old idea of thrift as something mean and niggardly we hope will be replaced by a better understanding. Without gainsaying, there is great need for us all to be thrifty—to be ready to take the initiative, to simplify living, to discountenance indulgences, to practise personal self-denial."—*"The Association Woman," March*, 1917.

CANADA.—National Service Work.—"The people of Harriston have, for many years, been hoping that some morning they would wake up and see smoke issuing from the big factory to the north of the track, and the main street once again a thronged thoroughfare, as it had been in days gone by.

"It is not many weeks since a rumour went the rounds that great quantities of food for the men at the front were to be prepared, and sent out from there, and the advent of the managers of the William Davies Company, who arranged to take over the largest hotel in the town and renovate it, so that it might serve as a hostel for girls, proved that the rumour was not without foundation.

"Since then, there has been any amount of life and activity on the corner, which before the days of prohibition had been the favourite lounging spot of men of leisure, and the notice on the front door reading 'Young Women's Christian Association Hostel for Women only, Open early in April,' was the prophecy of what was to be.

" Numbers of workmen of all kinds toiled day and night to transform a building that had been used only in part, into a most attractive home. Before all the preparations were completed, girls began to arrive, and those in charge of the Hostel had every available room filled as soon as the paint was dry enough to walk on. As it is hoped that nearly one hundred girls and women will live in the house, and another hundred come in for their meals, the new cafeteria which has been installed will be taxed to its utmost.

" To help to prepare food for our men at the front is to have a chance to share in National Service.

" We hope that the hostel, under the care of the Dominion Council of the Young Women's Christian Association, may prove such a success that other industries may be encouraged to move out of the overcrowded cities, and plan for more healthful surroundings for their employees.

" Plans for hostels for the fruit pickers in the Niagara Peninsula are about completed, and early in June, groups of college girls and others will be settling into good quarters at Beamsville, Winona, Bronte, and also at Oakville. In two of these centres the accommodation will be increased by putting up tents. All four houses are on the lake shore, where, after a day's work in the hot sun, a cool breeze will make life seem worth while to the toilers."—" *The Association Outlook*," *May*, 1917.

CANADA.—Women's Vote in Ontario.—" Is the vote a trifle to be used or wasted as one pleases? That question faces the new women voters who in Ontario now will be joining their already enfranchised sisters of Western Provinces. Some ignorant women and some foolish ones will ignore their new possession, but to the greater number we hope that a new sense of responsibility will come, and with it a great desire to learn what issues lie in the power of a citizen. For this reason a meeting was held in Toronto under the auspices of the National Council of Women. It was presided over by Mrs. Plumptre, Vice-President for Ontario, and also a member of the Dominion Council of the Young Women's Christian Association. The principles drawn up were so universally suggestive that they are quoted in full.

" 1. That the vote is a trust, to be used for the good of the State, and therefore every good citizen should register and cast his or her vote.

" 2. That the chief political danger of Canada does not lie in the policy of either party nor in the party system itself, but in the danger of the degradation of public life through the 'patronage' or 'spoils' system, and in the subordination of the good of the State to the good of the party, and that, therefore, all good citizens should use their influence and voting power to discountenance the collection and disbursement of secret party funds, and to put forward such parliamentary candidates as shall use their influence to secure the appointment to public office of only such men and women as are qualified to serve the State efficiently and honestly, regardless of their party affiliations.

" 3. That it is a patriotic duty to build up a strong and healthy home-born population in Canada, untainted by inherited disease, and that therefore all citizens should consider seriously the causes of infant mortality and its prevention, the proper measures to be adopted for the care of the feeble-minded, and the precautions necessary for the arrest and prevention of venereal diseases.

" 4. That as Canada is peopled not only by its natural increase of population, but also by immigration, it is equally necessary to consider the present system of immigration and settlement, more especially as to the control exercised over it by competing transportation companies, and also as to the qualifications of the officials appointed to inspect, receive and direct immigrants together with the measures (if any) adopted by the Government for the education and information of the foreign immigrant.

" 5. That it is also a public duty to increase the productive power of Canada in every possible way so as to lessen the waste of war and to provide food for all at reasonable prices, and by economy and self-denial to save in

order to loan money to the Government for the prosecution of the war; therefore, all good citizens should oppose waste and extravagance, in whatever form, in both public and private life.

"6. This meeting recommends to all voters that they should inquire carefully into the views of prospective candidates on these subjects before promising them their support.

"The above quotations seem to us to furnish excellent subjects for some of the Study Clubs or debates on civic questions which we hope will be planned by our Associations."

Canadian Young Women's Christian Association Secretary in Tokyo.—"Miss Emma Kaufman, our Secretary in Tokyo, after a few months' furlough, part of which was spent at the National Training School, New York, is returning to her work in Japan, sailing from San Francisco, April 3rd. Miss Kaufman has recently visited the Associations in Montreal, addressing meetings also at McGill University and Macdonald College."

The Centennial of the American Sunday School Union.—"The American Sunday School Union, the pioneer Sunday School Missionary Society, announces preparations for the celebration of its one hundredth anniversary this year. This unique and distinctive organisation has enjoyed a steady growth as the result of a remarkable record of results, and is now widely known as a powerful factor in the religious and social development of rural America.

"At the present time there are more than 200 active field missionaries promoting the work of the American Sunday School Union throughout the country. It is the particular work of these missionaries to establish and equip Sunday Schools in communities which are without religious development. Much of their work is in undeveloped sections of the country, difficult of access, and many of them have experienced the most severe hardships. All schools organized by the American Sunday School Union are free at all times to choose any denominational affiliations that they may prefer. In fact, a large percentage of the Sunday Schools thus established are the forerunners of regularly established churches.

"The American Sunday School has founded approximately 120,000 Sunday Schools, or an average of about four a day. Thus, literally, millions of children have been taught the principles of Christianity and the advantages of upright living, many of whom otherwise, in all probability, would never have known the work of God nor the meaning of worship in any form. And, in addition to these millions of children, many thousands of parents have become converted to Christian lives as a direct result of the Society's work."—*From "Lutheran Church Work," January* 25, 1917.

SINGAPORE.— Miss Hughes writes that the work in Singapore is progressing rapidly. The Hostel annexe is going up quickly, which will give accommodation for 16 more boarders, and a small hall for meetings. A membership campaign had been held, and they hoped to secure 100 new members before April 1st. The shorthand and typewriting school was well established. The Bible Classes are not well attended, but the opportunities for private talks are many, and the girls do not resent it. Miss Hughes had enjoyed meeting Miss Johnston and Miss Starkey on their way to China, and she pleads for more workers to be sent out, especially to Penang and Kuala Lumpur

KOREA.—Bible Training Classes.—"The missionaries in Korea are agreed that the corner-stone of their work lies in the system of Bible Training Classes, which is in vogue throughout the country. The plan was originated almost at the commencement of mission work in Korea, and the land is to-day honeycombed with these unique gatherings. They are not Bible Classes held each Sunday throughout the year, but are rather annual Bible Conferences lasting for a week or ten days. They are modelled somewhat along the lines of the Keswick and Northfield Conferences, but are devoted more ex-

clusively to the study of God's Word than either the English or American gatherings. Instead of there being one such Conference for the Christians of Korea, there are no less than a thousand throughout the country.

The visitor to Korea is at first puzzled by the multiplicity of these Bible Training Classes, but the plan upon which they are organised is simplicity itself. First, there is the local conference held in a single Church for the Christians of that community. Then there are scores of district classes, where the members of many groups will gather together for a week of Bible study. Finally, there are more than a score of general classes, where sometimes 1,000 or 1,200 Christians gather from long distances to listen to God's Word expounded by the missionaries and leading Korean teachers. These general classes are somewhat akin to the old Jewish festivals. Like the children of Israel in days of old, the Koreans frequently walk a hundred miles or more to attend the gatherings. They pay all their own expenses, and then for ten days revel in the study of God's Word."—*Extract from "Korea for Christ."*

Association Developments in Burma.—During a recent visit of Miss Carswell to Rangoon as National Secretary of the Young Women's Christian Association of India, Burma, and Ceylon, three special meetings of an evangelistic character were arranged for girls only. At the first there were 70 girls present, and at the second 95. The third, unfortunately, could not be held, as the boat went off on Thursday instead of Saturday, but the success of the first two was a great encouragement.

In a private letter, Miss Ledwich adds:—"Even within the last two months the work has extended, and I feel as never before, that it is not in any sense a case of forcing the door open, but it is pushing ahead to try and reach the open door before it is shut. It is simply marvellous the way things are opening up around us. Our latest piece of work is in a Nursing Division of the St. John's Ambulance formed in connection with our Association, the first in Burma! We have seventeen members, with Dr Kingsley as Divisional Surgeon; they are as keen as can be. At the annual meeting of the St. John's Ambulance, held in the Jubilee Hall, our Division gave a display of nursing.

"Our Guides are getting on well. Mrs Hogg's sister, who is just married, arrived from England last week. She has been a Guide Captain for five years, and she has promised to help us.

"Our next move is a Bible Class for the Burmese Nurses in the Dufferin Hospital. Dr. Cote is lending her house; it will be the beginning of our vernacular work. We hope to get different speakers for each meeting who can speak Burmese. We begin next Thursday with a tea party. Ma Saw Sa is helping us all she can, so you see how great the opportunities are and also how great the need for workers. It makes us feel that we don't want to take holidays at all, and yet to keep fit for the work we must."

MADRAS.—"At the meeting of the Madras Students' Convention convened under the chairmanship of Sir Subrmania Iyer, **an Anti-Dowry League** was started, and we are glad to notice that a number of young men have already joined it. The League is open to members from any part of the Presidency, including the Hyderabad and Mysore States, and membership is open to men as well as women, married as well as unmarried. There are three kinds of pledges to be taken by members, those relating to married members, those relating to unmarried members, and those common to both classes. The unmarried members are required to promise not to demand any dowry and to discourage their parents or guardians from demanding any on their behalf. They should also pledge themselves not to demand it for their children. The married members are required to make a promise not to demand any for their children. All members are also required to record a general promise 'to exert their influence to put down the dowry system, to expose its evils wherever it exists, and to try to make their friends, acquaintances, and relatives members of the League.' The objects of the League are entitled to the utmost sympathy from the general public, as the dowry system has been a mean and sordid institution, productive of untold misery, and all efforts to arrest

its harmful influence cannot but meet with warm encouragement. It has rendered parents and sons callous and unfeeling, while it has also been the means of impoverishing many a well-to-do family. One of the conditions of membership of the League is that in every case of marriage of a member information should be sent to the Secretary concerning the matter of dowry and gifts offered and accepted as well as the status of the bride's father, but such communications will be treated as strictly confidential. This rule is bound to exert a wholesome influence on the members."—*From "United India and Native States," January* 18, 1917.

INDIA.—The Background of the Y.W.C.A. Vernacular Department.—During January and February Miss Neve had a most valuable experience as Secretary of the Hindi-speaking Associations in going into camp with Canon and Mrs. Hensley as they made an evangelical tour in their district round Jubbalpore. She says:—

"I've got something now as a background in working for the Indian Christian women. I've seen a very little, but enough to give me some idea of the narrowness of the lives and interests of the uneducated Hindu women. The same questions are asked in every group. How old is the Miss Sahib? Is she married? When is she going to be married? Not even engaged? Alas! How is that? How many children has the mem-Sahib? Has she a son? and so on.

"Food and family. In these two words are comprehended the interests of these women, and then one begins to realise that this is what forms the background for our Vernacular Young Women's Christian Association. It is a stiff hill the women of India have to climb from a life absolutely absorbed in the interests of a narrow home, and tied down on every side by castes and prejudices and restrictions, to a life which realises the sisterhood of all, and the vastness and needs of the world around and life which is willing to give itself to work and think for others, to face opposition, and to take the lead. The missionary societies start the women on this upward climb. The Young Women's Christian Association helps them on. So the glimpses into the background of Indian womanhood should help me to enter more sympathetically in to the difficulties of the weak and wavering branches. After all the time it has taken the women of England to develop independence and initiative, is it any wonder with generations of ignorance and food and marriage chatter behind them, Indian women should disappoint us as leaders. We may groan at the flabbiness, the lack of perseverance and independence, and the lack of business methods of our local Indian secretaries; but isn't it a wonder they are secretaries at all?"

BOMBAY.—The Army Nurses' Club is proving the greatest boon to the nurses in Bombay. "It becomes more popular every week," says Miss Whitehead. "They feel it is their own, and they bring all their friends here. . . . There have been from 1,000 to 1,500 people for different meals every month since the Club was opened, and as there are only 246 Army nurses resident in Bombay (not counting Hospital Ships), it shows the Club is used well by the members." An exhibition was recently given by some Indian girls from the United Free Church Mission, who did a ball drill most beautifully and gracefully, and charmed the nurses.

ALEXANDRIA.—The Young Women's Christian Association recently gave another tea-party to mine-sweepers. "It's a huge pleasure," writes Miss Margerison, "to see their supreme delight. This time we are fetching them from the docks in motor lorries. The girls are very good in helping with all the preparations. It is the only touch of home these men have had since they left England; they simply seem to lift the ceiling in singing the hymns and raising a cheer for the ladies!"

LONDON.—Social Problems in the Light of Christianity.—A series of Conferences under this title was arranged to be held in Morley Hall during the spring by the Y.W.C.A. Department for the Study of Social Conditions. The object of the Conferences was to enable Y.W.C.A. Committee Members, Superintendents of Hostels, and Secretaries in and near

London to obtain a clearer idea of the conditions under which thousands of our Y.W.C.A. members work

At the first Conference Miss Constance Smith, His Majesty's Senior Lady Inspector of Factories, dealt with "Women and the Conditions of Industry," pointing out that good conditions of work meant health and comfort to the worker, and, in a large number if cases, the safe-guarding of her self-respect. Bad conditions often caused the gradual deterioration of her standards. Miss Smith gave a most interesting account of the way in which the war had altered conditions for women, sometimes for the better and sometimes for the worse.

Miss Tynan, who for some years was the Organiser of "The Shop Assistants' Union," spoke of the "Difficulties of Shop Assistants," especially emphasising their long hours of over 60, and sometimes even 90, hours a week. The war had helped to shorten hours for many of these workers. From the point of view of physical life, it was obvious, Miss Tynan said, that long hours were injurious, and the effect on spiritual life must also be bad. After the long day with its constant rush of work, the mind was fit for nothing but absolute rest or some such excitement as the cinema.

The Conference on "How to Abolish Sweating" was opened by Mr J. J. Mallon, Secretary of the National Anti-Sweating League. He showed how essential it was to safeguard wages by means of organisation or Trade Boards if we wished to protect the poorest and weakest members of the community.

Miss Florence, Secretary of the Association of Women Clerks and Secretaries, vividly described to a disappointingly small audience "The Girl Clerk, Before, During, and after the War."

None of the Conferences were well attended, and yet in every case an acknowledged expert had come most willingly and at the sacrifice of valuable time to discuss the subject with those who have the welfare of the workers at heart. A typed report of either of the Conferences can be obtained from the Secretary of the Social Department, 26 George Street, Hanover-square, London, W.1.

Women and the Diakonate in Scotland.—For some length of time there has been serious discussion in the United Free Church of Scotland as to the admission of women to the Diakonate. At the recent meeting of the Assembly at Edinburgh the greater portion of an afternoon session was devoted to the question. "The overture embodying the proposal stipulated that the enactment should be brought into operation in any congregation 'only if and when the minister and the Kirk Session, after due deliberation, have so determined.' The Rev. D. Woodside, Glasgow, reported that the overture had been approved by 34 Presbyteries, 25 disapproved, 2 expressed general approval, and 2 made no return. With regard to Kirk Sessions, 351 approved, 137 disapproved, 13 expressed general approval. In the discussion the Assembly had before them a proposal by the Glasgow Presbytery regarding the tenure of office—the suggestion being made that the limitation of the tenure of office to a term of years, without the necessity in that case of ordination, might meet objections against admitting women by way of ordination. Eventually the overture, in view of the strength of the minority opinion in the Church, was deferred for further consideration.—*"Scotsman," May 30th*, 1917.

Unordained Women Deacons in the Presbyterian Church of England.—At the Synod held in May, "The proposals on the relation of women to the work of the Church went through without opposition, Dr. Simpson emphasizing the unanimity of Presbyteries on the main points, and paying deserved tribute to the courtesy of those members of his Committee who did not altogether approve of this line of action. The Synod's Committees on Foreign Missions, Jewish Missions and Youth are therefore now authorised to co-opt women to the extent of one-fifth of their members and women communicants are declared eligible for election to the Committee of Management, Board of Managers, or unordained Diaconate of Congregations to the extent of one-third of the membership of such authority. An important step has thus been taken with remarkable unanimity and good will."—*"Presbyterian Messenger," May*, 1917.

SWITZERLAND.—Mademoiselle Malan writes of work begun among girls in munition factories in Geneva: "We began work in February in two factories, one employing 400 and another 1,000 women. We have rented an old house in a fine garden, and hope to turn it into a home for about 30 girls. At present we mostly use the garden and the ground floor for a restaurant and club house. This kind of work is quite new in Geneva, and it is rousing much interest. Our finances are at their lowest ebb, and we don't know how we can keep up work next winter and get our rooms heated. Amongst our members and the outer circle of girls there is just now a fine spirit of consecration to the higher service. They are very willing, and not a few of the working class girls are very fine and capable helpers. They seem to have entered into the spirit of Association work. Will you think of our factory work and pray for the girls we are trying to reach there? It is difficult work and needs much wisdom and spiritual power."

HUNGARY.—Budapesth.—Home de l'Union internationale des Amies de la Jeune Fille.—"L'année 1916 a causé bien des appréhensions au Comité du Home suisse pour gouvernantes et bonnes à Budapest. La tenue du ménage devenait de jour en jour plus difficile, les vivres plus chers et plus d'un article de première nécessité était presque introuvable. Mais les amis de cette maison hospitalière ont été particulièrement fidèles et lui ont aidé à sortir de ses nombreuses difficultés . . .

"La maison a été pleine du 1er janvier au 31 décembre. Il y a plus de pensionnaires regulières que de jeunes filles sans place, car toutes celles qui ont un pays, ne fut-ce qu'un demi-foyer, ont été réclamées par leur famille—et avec raison. Il y a chez nous des personnes âgées qui ne sauraient trouver un travail rémunérateur si elles rentraient dans leur patrie, où elles n'ont plus d'intérieur; du reste, ce ne sont pas les plus à plaindre. Ici elles travaillent ferme et gagnent bien, davantage même qu'autrefois; malheureusement la vie est trop chère pour pouvoir faire des économies. Elles apprécient beaucoup le Home et s'attachent à ce nouveau foyer. Elles en ont donné des preuves touchantes. L'année dernière elles ont fait un don au Home de 680 couronnes en plus de 50 couronnes contenues dans la tirelire. Et tout cela spontanément. . . . En 1916 le Home a ouvert ses portes à 290 personnes dont: 144 Suissesses, 33 Hongroises et Autrichiennes, 113 personnes d'autres nationalités."—"*Le Journal du Bien Public*," *Avril*, 1917.

ITALY.—Florence.—"During the tragic period of the world war the Y.W.C.A. of Florence has continued its work among girls without interruption, seeking not only to give practical help where needed, but to hold ever before them such ideals of life as will make of them good, strong, truly Christian women, worthy to be the wives and mothers of the greater Italy of the future.

"**The League of Volunteers** was started for those girls who, wishing to give up their leisure time to help others, felt the need for some sort of training. Meetings are held for them with a view to their development physically, socially, intellectually, and spiritually, and they are finding a wide field of work in the branches of the Association, and also in the Sunday Schools.

"**A little group of Girl Guides** has at last been organized, and the leaders are seeking to give these children, varying in age from 10 to 15 years, the ideas of initiative, discipline, and truth, which are the basis of the Girl Guide Movement.

"**Forty members, all of them working girls from 14 to 18 years, joined the Trousseaux Club,** and have been meeting on Thursday evenings to learn how to make their own trousseaux. While the work goes on, informal talks on hygiene, domestic economy, etc., are given, songs are sung, and before leaving there is a little physical drill and a short service. The girls themselves pay half the cost of the garments made at the meetings.

"The '**Pro Patria**' **Section** has worked for the Red Cross Society and in the 'Nests' for soldiers' children, woollen garments have been made and sent to the soldiers, and Christmas parcels for the relatives of Association members at the front. During the summer of 1915 groups of refugee girls were received at the Foyer, some free of charge, others paying what they were able. The most recent activity of the section has been to help to pack and send off parcels to prisoners in Austria.

Montreal.—"The Italian branch has met monthly in the rooms kindly lent by the Italian Y.M.C.A., and had discussions on various subjects. The members have also worked for the Italian Red Cross Society and Prisoners of War."—"*L'Alba*," *February*, 1917.

Bobbio Pellice.—"Our weekly meetings are attended regularly by fifty to sixty members. Bible Study still holds the place of honour, and consists chiefly of a recapitulation of the daily portions given in the Association Almanac, which is used by every member.

"This year, too, we have worked for our soldiers, the members going in twos from house to house collecting gifts of wool or money, and then returning to make the warm garments needed by the men at the front. On several occasions the Association gave a little reception to groups of men on leave from the front. **The Embroidery Class** is going on well, several very beautiful pieces of work having been completed during the winter. Several members have joined the '**League of the White Star**,' and it is hoped to increase this number.

"The spirit in our branch is good. Regular correspondence is kept up with absent members, who all speak with affection of the Association, through which, we can say with joy, many have heard the call of the Master, and are following Him."

Corato.—"Our little Association, which is hardly three years old, is still meeting regularly, and after the devotional part of the meeting, which always has the first place, we try to go a little farther afield, and study what women are doing in different parts of the world For us who live so far from the great centres of life, it is intensely interesting and inspiring to see what others are doing, as nurses, as Girl Guides, and in other ways; and sometimes it makes us, too, want to do more for society, to spread our wings, in fact! But, and we hope that *but* will not always be there, girls in small centres in South Italy such as ours have for the present to content themselves too often with an activity limited by the four walls of their home, and it is our business in the Y.W.C.A. to help them to make their Christian character tell just in that limited sphere. That the Y.W.C.A. means something to our members is shown by the fact that one of them took an acquaintance and her two little children into her house for a visit of some days, in order that she might bring her to the Association meeting, from which she would otherwise have been debarred owing to the antagonism of her parents.

"Although our Association is far from ideal, it gives us joy in many ways. In spite of innumerable difficulties, we have not had one meeting this year without new faces, and so we can go forward with courage and hope for the future."—"*L'Alba*," *March*, 1917.

Rome.—"Early in February the Rome Young Women's Christian Association opened an 'After-School' for the children of soldiers There are now about twenty children of from six to twelve years. They arrive at midday after school closes, and stay until five. First lunch is provided, consisting of a good soup or 'risotto,' prepared and served by students from the Foyer, then games, songs, and drill until two o'clock, after which work is the order of the day. Home lessons, sewing, mending, knitting for the older ones, and kindergarten work for the younger fill up the time, and it is good to see the happiness and pride of the children in their work. The success of this piece of work is due in the first instance to the energy and initiative of Miss Mary Rossi, but since the beginning many kind friends and Association members have given valuable help, both personal and financial, to the enterprise."—"*L'Alba*," *April*, 1917.

An International Society for Helping Girls.—"During 1916 the *Unione Benefica* of Rome has continued to give its aid to girls of all nationalities and creeds who have come to it with the honest desire to be able to help themselves. Two hundred and ninety-one girls of eight different nationalities were housed in our Institute during the year, and for all of them suitable work was found. We have also been able to find work, free of charge, for many outside the Institute. We are glad to be able to report that in spite of increased prices of all food materials we have not had to raise our own charges, and owing to the generosity of the *Comune* of Rome and our other supporters, have considerably reduced the deficit with which we started the year."—"*Attivita Femminile Sociale, April*, 1917.

JAPAN.—The Christian Women's Society.—"The Japanese Christian Women's Society is doing splendid work in rousing the women of Japan to realise their responsibilities with regard to social service. It is, of course, the Japanese women themselves who must organise efforts to deal with the many problems touching the lives of women, but until lately their attitude has been one of helplessness, if not of indifference; all this, however, is changing. Many Christian schools are encouraging their girls to work for factory hands and children in orphanages, not so much for what they can do in the present as for a training for the future, and to bring them into touch with present-day problems. Splendid work along these lines is being done by the Y.W.C.A. hostels in Tokyo, the desire of those who have the welfare of these girl students at heart being not only to save them from the great moral dangers of city life, but to give them a vision of service as they pass out into the wider life of the future. Many Japanese ladies, inspired by the example of the Christians, are joining in petitions to the governors of provinces regarding the licensed houses which do so much harm in the family life of Japan, and are beginning to interest themselves in the welfare of the domestics and baby-tenders who lead such pitiable lives.

"This brings us to think of the working women of Japan. By far the larger number are of the farming class, who constitute fifty-eight per cent. of the population. They certainly lead happier lives than wealthier and less hard-working women, but as a whole less is being done for them than for any other class, while according to the latest investigations, morality in the villages is terribly in the decline. This is greatly owing to the fact that there is an increasing need for all in the family to become wage-earners, and that the great factory system is taking thousands of these women away from their homes with disastrous results mentally and morally. When they return, they bring back with them the lower moral standards of the city. According to the latest statistics, twenty-three per cent. of the girls who enter factories die within one year of their return home, while half of these die of tuberculosis. Sixty per cent. never return at all, and of criminal girls arrested in Osaka during a certain period forty-nine per cent. had been factory hands. And yet the conditions in the factories in Osaka are said to be better than in any other town in Japan. The problem of the factories is a sorely pressing one, for though there are factories which come well up to our home ideals, this is exceptional."—*Missionary Review, June-July*, 1917.

Y.W.C.A. Finance Campaign.—"The Tokyo Young Women's Christian Association and the National Young Women's Christian Association expect to spend the last three weeks of April in a joint Finance Campaign. The National Committee is to try for large gifts towards an Endowment Fund of yen 50,000. Both the Tokyo Y.W.C.A. and the National Association need gifts towards running expenses, and both organisations will also try for new memberships."—"*The Japan Evangelist," April*, 1917.

Osaka.—At the National Committee of the Young Women's Christian Association of Japan on February 3rd, "Miss Ruth Emerson was appointed General Secretary for Osaka, to begin work there in September; and the Misses Kawai, Emerson, and Matthew were requested to spend a week in

Osaka during the Easter Holidays to consult with all those interested in work for Japanese girls, and decide how best to begin the Young Women's Christian Association work there."—*"The Young Women of Japan," March, 1917.*

Attitude of the Japanese People towards Christianity.—"What is the attitude of the people towards Christianity?"—The replies to this question naturally vary greatly with the locality and type of the community. The usual objections on the ground of its being a foreign religion or being detrimental to the national interests of Japan are common. Generally speaking, Christianity is regarded by the better educated people as being good, perhaps better than other religions, but withal not needed; or by others as good in the main, but being radically opposed to some most important Japanese custom of long standing, and therefore not to be encouraged. Many of the younger people regard it as being good, it is true, but decidedly too *kyukutsu,* and therefore impracticable, or as setting certain impossible ideals. The large mass of the people may be regarded as either prejudiced against Christianity through ignorance of it or as indifferent to it altogether. Direct opposition on the ground of Buddhist teaching seems to prevail largely in strong Shinshu districts."

CHINA.—Phonographs and Victrolas in Tientsin.—"Since the Chinese have become interested in foreign music," writes Miss Kelley, of the Tientsin Young Women's Christian Association, "there has been a great run on phonographs and victrolas. It is interesting to hear *Tipperary* and *Harry Lauder* at the House of People, who do not know one word of English. There are also a number of Chinese records made, but these are usually by actors and in the high treble voice which is supposed to be good in these circles. It is fine to hear a Chinese congregation singing hymns, for the men and women have fine voices when taught to sing properly, and I would like to have a record of the singing *Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty* for sale along with some of these records which are all the Chinese singing that the average foreigner out here knows about. We have a victrola which was given us by one of our members. But there are only six records, as Miss King and myself were the only ones who gave any, and that was as far as we got in our victrola library. The records are very expensive out here, and most people who have a good selection have got them from home. But at the Sunday meetings we play these few while waiting for the people to arrive, and when the children want a good march on a wet day we have two of those. The hymns that we have are all on double records, and include: *Hark, hark, my soul, Abide with me, There's a Friend for little children, Eternal Father, strong to save, The Church's One Foundation, and Nearer my God to Thee.*

Tientsin.—"To me the most successful of all our ventures has been the school for poor children of the neighbourhood which was started in September, and which meets twice a week in the mornings. They are just poor children from the neighbourhood, and they were all as dirty and as wild as they could be. The school is now clean and orderly and sings several hymns, and can recite several passages of the Bible. As well, they have read two of the National Readers, and some are learning to write characters. They are now in the next room on this bitter cold day, singing 'Jesus loves me' with all their heart and lungs. They all attend our Sunday meeting, and the Primary, as I call it often, is the biggest and earliest of all our classes. Of course it is small, yet thirty clean children in a non-Christian neighbourhood is a beginning, and I understand they are growing in numbers all the time."—Miss L. Kelley, December 29th, 1916.